FABLES;

ANCIENT and MODERN:

AFTER THE MANNER OF

LAFONTAINE.

BY

WILLIAM WALLBECK.

FLORIFERIS UT APES IN SALTIBUS OMNIA LIBANT,
OMNIA NOS ITIDEM DEPASCIMUR AUREA DICTA,
AUREA, PERPETUA SEMPER DIGNISSIMA VITA.

LUCRET.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

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THE LIFE OF CERVANTES,

In ſmall Octavo, Price ONE SHILLING.

AND

SOCRATES AND XANTIPPE,

A BURLESQUE TALE,

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DEDICATION.

TO

RICHARD WOODESON,

VINERIAN PROFESSOR OF THE LAWS OF ENGLAND. (OXFORD.)

SIR.

TO endeavour at *imitating* LAFONTAINE, to whom ſo many good judges have aſcribed excellence *above imitation*, will be thought (whatever apologies I may have to offer) highly temerarious. But, how much have I added to that temerity, by ſetting your Name at the head of this Dedication! — Thereby obtruding an imperfect Work upon the notice of ſo able a Critic: — of one converſant with the living languages, as well as the dead; and competent to compare theſe my Fables with thoſe of the Great Maſters. How much mine muſt ſuffer by the compariſon, I am well aware. But, acute as is your penetration, and correct your taſte, I am leſs afraid of the ſcrutiny than they would be who know you only in your literary capacity; as a Profeſſor, and a Scholar.

I am

I am under leſs alarm, becauſe I am acquainted as well with the goodneſs of your heart, as the ſtrength of your head. Severity of Judgement, I know, will be attempered by the gentleneſs of Candour.

"*Summum jus, ſumma injuria:*"—is a maxim which holds as good in Critiſcim, as in Law. He muſt be liberal, as well as learned, who is qualified to ſit in either Court. "*Uſe every Man after his deſert, and who ſhall eſcape whipping?*"—Not I;—ſinner as I am. No; nor even HAYLEY himſelf; who in ſome of his Works approaches as near perfection, as humanity can do: but if no offences were to be paſſed over, the Beadles of Parnaſſus would have laſhed him long ago.

What HORACE has ſaid of Man himſelf, may very well be applied to his Compoſitions,

—Vitiis nemo ſine naſcitur: optimus ille eſt
Qui minimis urgetur.

Millions of Men have been writing for thouſands of years; and there never yet came from the Preſs one faultleſs Work.—Nor, probably, ever will. For,—if, under the pains and penalties of Sin, the enthuſiaſm of Virtue, and the certain rewards of Religion, Man is incapable of attaining to Perfection in his moral capacity,—it would be abſurd to expect ſupreme excellence from him as an Author. Unleſs, indeed, we are to ſuppoſe that *Poetry* is more animating than Virtue; that

that the *Critics'* Damnation is more terrible than the Wrath of GOD; that our paſſion for *fame* is more ardent than our zeal for Religion; and that our *temporal Intereſt* is more dear to us than our eternal Happineſs.

As far as theſe ought to influence any one, they do me. I hope to reap *Profit* from my Lucubrations,—becauſe I have occaſion for money. For *Fame* I avow myſelf a Candidate; though my friends tell me I am a wretched canvaſſer: for I make my pretenſions with a confidence ſure to give offence to little minds. I am ſorry for it. I would not ſeem arrogant: but I cannot at all times check the ardour of an aſpiring ſpirit. As to the common tricks, the low, baſe arts of electioneering, I ſcorn to practiſe them. I know not how to flatter:

Or crook the pregnant hinges of the knee,
Where thrift may follow fawning.

I cannot wheedle; and I will not bribe.

Making public theſe principles is not the way to gain over to my ſide the majority of Voters. Well, then; I will be content with the Voices of thoſe only, whoſe patronage is ſufficient honour.

And here, not impertinently, I beg leave to make my acknowledgements to that learned, and reſpectable Corps of Journaliſts, the CRITICAL REVIEWERS, who

who were pleaſed to ſpeak ſo very handſomely of both my former Publications. (*)

Although I cannot meanly ſtoop to ſue for favours, no one has a more grateful ſenſe of obligations conferred. And, the greateſt obligation,—indeed, the only one that can properly be conferred on Authors,—and the greateſt,—indeed, the only ſervice the Journaliſts can do to Literature, is by full, fair, candid, and impartial Criticiſm. Such every Writer not intoxicated with vanity muſt wiſh for. For my own part, I can ſay with great ſincerity,

Verum amo, verum mihi dicite de me.

It would ill become me to appreciate reſpectively the Works of the PUBLIC CRITICS, were I ever ſo well acquainted with them: but, in truth, there are ſome I know only by their Advertiſements. Such as fall in my way (at the diſtance I am from the Metropolis) I peruſe with the curioſity natural to an Author;—but not of one *tremblingly alive all o'er*. Happily, I am not of a timid nature. Should a Drawcanſir, diſtort his angry phiz at me, cock his Kevenhuller Hat,

* Of the one, THE LIFE OF CERVANTES, the account is too long to inſert here; highly flattering as it is: I therefore refer the Reader to the CRITICAL REVIEW, for Auguſt 1785.

Of the other, SOCRATES AND XANTIPPE, I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak preſently; but for a full account, I alſo refer the Reader to the ſaid REVIEW, for March 1786.

Hat, lay his hand upon his ſword, and thunder out an artillery of oaths, loud enough to break the drum of a nervous man's ears,—I could behold, and hear him perfectly compoſed. Should the Pope, in his holy wrath, anathematize me for a Heretic; and curſe me as oft and *piouſly* as Dr. SLOP did OBADIAH,—I ſhould liſten to him, not with the emotion of anger, but of pity;—of regret that the imbecility of the human mind is ſuch, as to miſtake the ſuggeſtions of Diaboliſm, for the impulſe of Religion.

Should a Pſeudo-Critic—(I have now got to the depth of my anticlimax)—Should a Pſeudo-Critic, glancing his eye over the Title Page, exclaim, with peeviſh wit, "*O, Imitatores! ſervum pecus:*"—Then, reading one ſhort Fable, condemn all as execrable;—I ſhould be little hurt; and leſs ſurpriſed at it: for I have often ſeen ſuch Men of *intuitive* genius, rummaging over a Bookſeller's Counter, and paſſing judgment upon a dozen New Pamphlets, in about as many minutes.

Theſe ſuperficial, mock Critics, remind me of a *Farrier*, whom I would fain have perſuaded to adminiſter *James's Powder* to a ſick horſe of mine. "'' No, no: Maſter. There is not enough in that "'' Paper to do any good. Beſides I don't like the "'' *colour* of it.'"—'The colour! Friend. Do you 'judge of medicines by the eye only? Do you never

'*analyze*

'*analyze* them?' "'No; never: Sir.—If you catch "'me telling *any lies*, I'll cure your horſe for nothing.'"

Excuſe the digreſſion, and the *pun*, too; which is almoſt bad enough to be a good one.

They, however, who condemn a Book *in toto*, are not an Author's worſt enemies; becauſe their opinions have weight only with ſelf-confeſſed Blockheads, who are content to pin their faith upon another's ſleeve. Or, as IAGO ſays,

Who will as tenderly be led by the noſe
As Aſſes are.

The moſt formidable are thoſe, who, from innate baſeneſs of ſoul, or from rivalry, or jealouſy, or the jarring intereſts of Bookſellers, ſet down to ſcrutinize a Work with *malice prepenſe*; reſolved, at any rate, to pick a quarrel with, and tear to pieces the poor Author laying at their mercy.

How poſſible it is to pull to pieces even thoſe ſtrongeſt in fame, every one muſt know, who has read JOHNSON's *Criticiſms* on the *Epitaphs* written by POPE. The juſtneſs of thoſe Criticiſms it is not my purpoſe to diſpute. Like every thing that came from JOHNSON, they ſhow the hand of a great Maſter: at once evincing that clearneſs of comprehenſion, that ſhrewdneſs of intellect, and ſolidity of judgement, by which he was ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed: and which, expreſſed in well-choſen words, artificially, yet happily arranged,

arranged, formed a language ſingularly pleaſing, and peculiarly his own; being at the ſame time ſmooth and energetic; not too copious, nor too conciſe. So that DR. JOHNSON,—whether he was or was not the very beſt claſſic Scholar of his day,—was certainly the very beſt didactic Writer.

Nevertheleſs, (to go back to the ſubject,) I muſt ſay, the Doctor's Criticiſms upon POPE's Epitaphs are not to be reckoned amongſt the beſt efforts of his genius. The remarks are none of them trite, but ſome are trivial: and, upon the whole, they look ſo like *Criticiſm* in the common and worſt acceptation of the word,—*the determination to find fault*,—and ſo hard they bear upon the Poet, that I think he would not have oppreſſed a Cotemporary with them: particularly if the Author had been a young one, only then riſing to notice. For, inurbane and harſh as DR. JOHNSON outwardly appeared, he had great goodneſs of heart, and would not have exerciſed ſuch undue ſeverity as might have affected a Writer's fortune, as well as fame. Whereas, by publiſhing his Remarks after POPE's demiſe, he has done *him* leſs injury, and as much ſervice to the cauſe of Literature. By quickening the Reader's intellect, and enlarging his underſtanding, the Critic has freed him from that ſuperſtitious awe with which he was wont to contemplate the Poet's ſhrine.

By exculpating JOHNSON from the cruelty of criticiſm, inaſmuch as thoſe ſevere remarks were not publiſhed till after POPE's demiſe, I do not mean to imply that they who adopt the contrary mode of proceeding are culpable. For that would be to involve in guilt a very numerous claſs of Critics, indeed,—the Periodical REVIEWERS;—whoſe expreſs purport is to paſs judgement on the living. Nor could they otherwiſe be of half the ſervice to Literature. For in the *influenza* which at preſent rages—'*Venienti occurrite morbo*'—is an aphoriſm to be kept in mind: the *Cacoethes ſcribendi*, attacked in time, ſaves many an Authorling, whoſe diſeaſe would otherwiſe ſoon become incurable.

But,—granting the ſervice which the Critics do to the commonwealth of Letters, by conducting to the Temple of Fame thoſe who have merit, and excluding thoſe who have none;—do they not ſometimes betray a haughtineſs and contempt bordering upon inſolence towards the rejected Candidates? Do they not ſometimes thruſt back with a rudeneſs ill becoming the character they ſhould maintain, thoſe who preſent themſelves? I have heard ſome of them compared to 'Saucy Jacks in office' fond of ſhowing their authority, and delighting in laying about their cudgels.

Their Strictures, certainly, are very ſevere at times:

more

more or leſs ſo according to the diſpoſition of the perſon brandiſhing the pen. Not that I believe their apparent cruelty often proceeds from malignance, but moſt commonly from an inconſiderate levity of heart, and the uncontroulable wantonneſs of wit: which may happily ſerve in ſome ſort as excuſe to themſelves, but is no alleviation of pain to the poor Sufferers. They, like the pelted Frogs in the Fable, may cry out,—"Alaſs! What is ſport to you,—is death to "us."

It is probable that what I have ſpoken thus unreſervedly of the wrongheaded or wronghearted Men amongſt the REVIEWERS,—(and what large Society hath not men of both deſcriptions amgonſt them?)—will give thoſe very Members offence: but that is matter of little concern to me; confident as I am that nothing I have ſaid can be conſtrued into diſreſpect for the REVIEWERS in general, or ſlight for their works. To contemn the folly of ſome, and reprobate the malignancy of others, is not to impeach a whole Claſs;—not, though ſpoken of men of ordinary rank: how much leſs, then, ſhall partial cenſure affect the whole of a learned Society: the majority of whom muſt, neceſſarily, from having had a liberal education, have elevated minds.

In

In FRANCE, where one in every hundred—(which is about the proportion of thoſe who can write)—is an Author; and the other ninety-nine—(who can hardly read)—are Critics: and where almoſt every Province holds its diſtinct petty Court of Inquiſition upon Authors, I wonder not that the word *Journaliſt* is a term of ignorance and reproach.

But, in GERMANY, and with US, the *Reviewers* ſurely ſtand upon a reſpectable footing; and were it not that I know the *Genus irritabile Vatum*, (that Scribblers are not Stoics, but will cry out when they are laſhed)—I ſhould be ſurpriſed at the invidious ſarcaſms, and invectives ſo frequently and ſo undeſervedly thrown out againſt them.

This, if I know my own independency of ſpirit, I ſay not to curry future favour; nor with reference to their reports of my paſt Publications. It is what I ſaid long before I had any thoughts of appearing in Print. Nor do I ſay it in reſpect to any particular Perſon; for I have not perſonal acquaintance with, nor I do know even by name any one Public Critic in the whole circle of Letters: but I know of what eſſential uſe their labours are to Literature:—that but for them the World would long ago have been overrun with nonſenſe.

I am afraid, SIR, I have almoſt tired you with dwelling ſo long on the ſubject of Criticiſm and Critics. Had it been addreſſed to you only, you might very well twit me with the cant phraſe,—"*Sus Minervam*;"—but, as the *King's Speech* is, by cuſtom of Parliament, debated as the Words of the *Miniſter*, ſo prefatory Diſcourſes, though they have ſome *great Name* or other tacked to them, are looked upon as vehicles of information to *Readers in general*. It was for their ſakes I have endeavoured to ſhow the REVIEWERS in a juſt light. For, all the Portraitures I have yet ſeen of them have been taken by partial hands. By theſe they have been repreſented as Giants; by thoſe as dwarfs. By ſome they have been idolized as Demi-gods; and execrated as Devils by others. The extremes are evidently faulty. The truth of every character muſt be taken at the medium, betwixt the partiality of Friends, and the diſlike of Enemies. The Critics certainly make no pretence to ſupernatural powers: nor are they exempted from human frailties. They are Men, like as we (Scribblers) are, variouſly endowed with the qualities of the head and heart.

But now, SIR, it is high time I ſhould ſay ſomething of the nature of the Work I have the honour of preſenting to you. And, in ſo doing, I will endea-

vour

vour to take the middle courſe, betwixt ſelf-praiſe, and ſelf-condemnation. It is the track we ſhould all keep; but it requires more courage, and leſs vanity than generally falls to an Author's ſhare.

——— *Juſſa monent Heleni Scyllam atque Charibdim*
Inter utramque viam, lethi diſcrimine parvo,
Ni teneant curſus.

From whence the proverb,—'*Incidit in Scyllam, &c.*—which I hope will not be verified in me. In ſpeaking of this work, I truſt I ſhall neither be daſhed againſt the rock of preſumption, nor drawn into the gulph of deſpondency. My little Bark, ſurely, will get ſafe through the Strait, let what may happen to it in the wide Ocean.

I have added to the Title of 'FABLES,'—'AFTER THE MANNER OF LAFONTAINE,'—not to provoke a compariſon of this my Work with that great Maſter's, but merely to diſtinguiſh it from any thing we have of the Fable kind in our language: unleſs ſome ſorry Tranſlations of ſome ill-ſelected from his Fables are thought worthy of that deſcription:—which certainly they are not. Had they, ſuch as they are, at all reſembled the Original, I would as ſoon have hung up BABRIAS's Head, as LAFONTAINE's, for my Sign.

To

To the Frenchman's honour, and to the credit of the Moderns, it muſt be owned LAFONTAINE'S Work is incomparably ſuperior to that of any ancient Fabuliſt's, now extant; not excepting PHÆDRUS himſelf.

In ſaying this you will not ſuſpect me of giving undue preference to modern Writers. Few perſons hold the Ancients in ſuch high eſtimatation as I do. My partiality, if I have any, leans towards them. Nor would I part with the little knowledge I have of the Claſſics for the wealth of all the World. For this enthuſiaſm which ſtands me in ſo great ſtead, I am indebted to your late much honoured Father. I ſhall ever account as the moſt fortunate circumſtance of my life the having been put to KINGSTON School, under the tuition of ſuch a *Cultor Juvenum:* as good a Maſter,—Father,—Huſband,—as good a Man in all the relative duties of life as ever adorned humanity:—a thorough Chriſtian; of exemplary morals; and of earneſt, unaffected piety. Occupied, as much of his time neceſſarily was, by his temporal avocation, no one could be more aſſiduous in the holy Miniſtry. And though he died undignified,—neither Biſhop, Dean, nor Prebendary, (for he had no *parliamentary Intereſt,*)—his Learning and his Virtues would have done the higheſt credit to the higheſt Station in the Church.

Church. Nor was he unaffected in his piety alone, but in his general manners; in his whole deportment. He did not even ſtudy to do good; it was natural to him; and came from him ſpontaneouſly. His heart was as enlarged as his underſtanding. Quick in his intellects and feelings; and prompt in charity. How many went daily from his doors calling upon Heaven to bleſs him! I believe I ſpeak within compaſs, when I ſay, I have myſelf ſeen him relieve many, many hundreds: and I never ſaw him turn away one ſingle Creature empty handed. So little had he of worldly policy, and the warineſs of narrow minds, that he would have relieved the greateſt villain upon earth had he ſeen him in diſtreſs. The probability of being duped was of no conſideration with him, when it was poſſible he *might* do good. In his reproofs to known Vagabonds he preſerved his temper, and his dignity; but did not ſacrifice his feelings to the affectation of juſtice. He conſidered the very worſt as his fellow-creatures: he gave them lectures, it is true; but he gave them his good-wiſhes alſo: and he gave them *money*;—that unequivocal mark of kindneſs and compaſſion.

Poſſeſſed as my honoured maſter was of every good quality of the head and heart, I have dwelt particularly on his charity, becauſe it is the beſt virtue Mankind can boaſt.

As

As he was beneficent towards the poor; and kind to ſtrangers; ſo was he clement and indulgent in his School: inflicting puniſhment, of neceſſity, at times; but much more frequently remitting it.

But what rendered him particularly amiable, and eſtimable, was, agenuine truth and ſimplicity of character: which, though he lived to a venerable age, and had had much intercourſe with the world, nothing had been able to corrupt. Though it was impoſſible but he muſt have been witneſs to ſcenes of villainy, he was himſelf ſo incapable of committing a baſe action, that he was altogether unſuſpicious of harm.

Amongſt the qualities it was natural to expect in a Perſon whoſe time was devoted to Letters, Mr. WOODESON poſſeſſed others which are not the characteriſtics of a Scholar.—He was perfectly well bred: as much ſo as if he had paſſed his early years at Court, inſtead of at College. Courteous, candid, and affable. Agreeable in his perſon, graceful in addreſs, and pleaſing in converſation: adapting himſelf with peculiar felicity to the diſpoſition and capacity of thoſe with whom he converſed. Sprightly and jocoſe with the young and gay; ſedate and argumentative with the learned, and the old.

Of MR. WOODESON's Erudition I might of my own knowledge ſay a great deal, having ſtudied under

him no leſs than ten years; but inſtead of ranging over ſo wide a field, and writing (which I could do) a whole volume on the ſubject, I will confine it to a ſingle Anecdote, which I had from a Cotemporary of Mr. W——'s at OXFORD; and which may ſerve to give the Reader a tolerable notion of his Learning.

When he was only a Student he was a marked good Scholar: and wrote Verſes (Greek as well as Latin) with ſuch facility, that he never refuſed his pen to any body. And, as goodnature is often abuſed, it happened frequently to him, that, his fellow Students came to his Rooms at his breakfaſt time, and enticing him with ſome intereſting theme, ate up his breakfaſt, whilſt he was writing verſes for them.

I leave to the Reader to imagine what a vaſt ſuperſtructure of Learning muſt have been raiſed on ſuch a foundation, by the labour of thirty or forty years; aſſiduouſly teaching, and expounding the beſt Claſſic Authors. I have, ſince I left School, read moſt of the Commentators on moſt of the Claſſics, with ſome attention, but never any with half the ſatisfaction, nor from any of them have I got half the information I have from the oral expoſitions, the learned, juſt and elegant criticiſms of the late MR. WOODESON, my ever-to-be-remembered, and ever-reſpected Maſter.

By

By this my tribute to the worth of one, whoſe memory is almoſt as dear to me as it can be to you, I may, not improbably, have renewed your ſorrow for the loſs of ſuch a Parent; I may have torn open thoſe wounds which the lenient hand of time had healed, and have made them bleed afreſh;—yet, SIR, am I not diſpoſed to entreat your pardon:—for the ſame reaſon that I ſhall make no apology to the Reader for this long Digreſſion:—becauſe, it is impoſſible to think of a good Man's removal from Earth to Heaven, without being better for the reflection.

At the beginning of this Dedication, I intimated that I had ſome ſort of excuſe to offer for preſuming to *imitate* LAFONTAINE. The truth is, I was provoked to attempt it by the arrogancy of a Frenchman, who, not ſatisfied with my frank acknowledgement that we had no Fabuliſt worthy to be compared with LAFONTAINE, would have it, 'that his Stile was inimitable; and his Wit of a brilliancy peculiar to the 'Genius of France: and which together would for 'ever mock the efforts of all other Nations, and more 'particularly the *phlegmatic Engliſh*.' The impetuous anſwer I made, I am willing to forget: but the provocation lives in my memory; and theſe Fables are the fruits of it. Forced fruits have not always the beſt flavour;

flavour: and ſo I fear it will be found in this inſtance: partly, indeed, from my own fault: I was in too great haſte to produce them: making the fire in the ſtoves too ardent; and neglecting from time to time to prune the tree.

As it has been invariably my cuſtom to carry a Book in my pocket: in order to perfect myſelf in French, when I went abroad, I gave up my Elzivir Claſſics, (not without great reluctance,) to make room for French Literature; and having met with LAFONTAINE's Works, amongſt others of commodious ſize, he was on that account, as well as his great merit, commonly my *Compagnon de Voyage*; and almoſt conſtantly from the time I purpoſed to take his likeneſs. How often have I read him over,—and always with new delight! How often has he regaled my mind,—and my body, too, (by that inexplicable ſympathy betwixt our corporal and mental faculties,)—when I have been labouring up the JURA Mountains, in a ſultry day! How often have I rambled about the Country of the LAC DE JOUX, (that delicious Summer Reſidence,) with nobody to converſe with but LAFONTAINE! And how often, earneſtly engaged with him, have I loſt my way; and after ſome pains to find a beaten track, have ſet me down with LAFONTAINE, waiting patiently till ſome chance Traveller,

or

or Peaſant came acroſs to direct me home! One wretched night which I paſſed in a Wood, for want of ſuch fortunate occurrence, was made more wretched, as I thought, than ſleepleſs hunger could have made it, had I but had a light, and LAFONTAINE to have cheered me. Though, to tell the truth, I was under ſuch apprehenſions of the Aborigines of that Country,—the Wolves,—that I wiſhed more for light by which to eſcape, than to ſtudy. What gave full force to my terrors, was, that I knew for certain a Wolf had paid a viſit a very little while before, and in the day time too, at a Village thereabout, and made bold with the haunch of a Peaſant ſleeping in a Barn.* Nor Wolves only, but Bears, wild Boars, and wild Beaſts of all kinds crouded upon my imagination; and I was ready to cry out with the Epicuriſt,

——— *Genus horriferum Natura ferarum,*
Humanæ genti infeſtum, terraque marique,
Cur alit?

Happily I eſcaped, without other harm than a cold; but I took care that my favourite Companion ſhould never lead me into ſuch another ſcrape.

* Such accidents are very rare in Summer time: the Wolves inhabit the inacceſſible ſummits of the JURA, and ſeldom deſcend unleſs driven by extreme hunger; or diſlodged by ſnow. The one which had lately come down was ſuppoſed to be a female that had loſt its Cub.

To

To get thorough inſight into LAFONTAINE, and to acquire his *manner*, I not only read him again, and again; but I tranſlated ſome of his Fables almoſt literally into proſe. That taſk, however, I ſoon gave up; not only from the impoſſibility of tranſfuſing the ſpirit of one language into another, but that MINERVA has given me too much,—or too little—genius, for ſuch employ. Certainly I have not the patience and perſeverance neceſſary—*Verbum verbo reddere.* Inſtead of which I undertook a very free tranſlation in verſe: changing the thoughts, and paraphraſing the wit: till I thought myſelf tolerably adept in his art. Then I ventured to dig for myſelf into the precious mines of ESOP, APTHONIUS, PHÆDRUS, and others. Though I muſt own, there are alſo in this collection ten or twelve of baſer metal; a factitious compoſition of my own, ſtill ſtamped after LAFONTAINE's manner. Which thoſe particular Fables are it can ſcarcely be expected of me to point out: any more than it could be required of a Jew Fabricator, or an Italian Vender of *modern-Antiques* to declare which of his Articles were counterfeits. It is being tolerably honeſt, as the World goes, to apprize the Reader that there are two ſorts. Beſide, would it not be paying him too bad a compliment, and myſelf too good a one, to ſup-

ſuppoſe he could not diſtinguiſh them, without any indication from me?

A Swiſs Friend of mine, whoſe Vineyards were at LA COTE, piqued himſelf upon growing excellent Wine; but, aware of People's prejudice in favour of what is rare, and foreign, he uſed to tell his Gueſts,—'Meſſieurs, there is *Old-Hock*, as well as *Cote* Wine 'upon the table; though the Bottles are only labelled 'No. 1 and 2. Pleaſe to taſte of both, and ſtick to 'whichever you prefer.'

In ſuch ſort would I addreſs my Readers. "Meſ-"dames and Meſſieurs, I have ſet variety of Fables "before you. Examine them all well: and thoſe "which you like beſt, commend the moſt: without "regard to the Inventor;—whether ESOP, PHÆ-"DRUS, LAFONTAINE, or—Your humble Servant."

But, a further reaſon for my not diſtinguiſhing the Fables of my *own invention* from the others, was, that it might look like putting in a claim to thoſe only; whereas I preſume to call the reſt my own. For, excepting two or three very ſhort ones, told ſimply, and without embelliſhment; and about as many copied from LAFONTAINE, I challenge the whole as my property.

My claim may, very likely, be called in queſtion: and

and I ſhall be told, I have no more right to the *altered* Fables, than a Thief has to the Horſes he has ſtolen, becauſe, forſooth, he has contrived to diſguiſe them by altering their marks.

The Caſes, I truſt, are not exactly parallel. I do not like to be called a Thief, in jeſt: not even a literary one; a Plagiary. I have ſpread my Toils, 'tis true: and caught a many animals.—But are not Lions, Wolves, and ſuch like *feræ naturæ?* Granted, that many of them have PHÆDRUS's, or LAFONTAINE's marks upon them, having been in their Menageries; can either of them prove any better title than temporary poſſeſſion? To go back to ESOP himſelf, whom we call the *Father of Fable*;—upon what ground do we call him ſo? Upon none; but on conjecture. Is there any Manuſcript of ESOP's extant? Have we any good teſtimony that he ever *wrote* a ſingle Fable? That he was a witty Fellow the whole World agrees. And ſo was LORD CHESTERFIELD; and QUIN; and JOE MILLER eke: but I queſtion if they were the Authors of a tithe of the notable ſayings, which go under their names reſpectively. Nevertheleſs, it may happen in the courſe of a thouſand years, that ſome intereſted Compiler will collect them all, and what more he can gather, into one vaſt volume, and aſcribe them to KILLIGREW, or ſome other

other notorious Jeſter. And of this we are ſure, the anachronic blunders can not be more glaring than thoſe in many Fables falſely aſcribed to ESOP.

I do not mean to revive Diſputes which hitherto have tended to no other purpoſe than to ſhow the acrimony of Men *even of Letters*,—but, I would weaken the force of the objection that may be made to my Book, *for not being entirely original.*

Though my vanity is ſo great, that I think I have acquired ſomething of LAFONTAINE's Manner; imagine not, SIR, that I pretend to have attained his Excellence. Not that I think *that* ſo abſolutely unattainable, as ſome have thought.———But, let me not ſay any thing to leſſen him in the opinion of the World: no: that would look like Envy; a paſſion which did not actuate me, when I undertook this Work. (*Non hæc* INVIDIA, *verum eſt* ÆMULATIO.) If ever I be baſe enough to injure the fame of true genius, may the Waters of Hippocrene be poiſon to me. As long as French Literature laſts LAFONTAINE muſt ſhine with great reſplendence. But, as he ſhines in another Hemiſphere;—as FRANCE is the meridian of his glory; the only benefit we can receive muſt be from the reflection of his rays. And, until a fitter Planet be formed, I would fain ſerve as the uſeful Body to reflect his light. And if thought well of by the In-

habitants of Britain, I ſhall account my ſtation very honourable.

VIRGIL himſelf, *(Divinum illud Latinæ Poëſeos lumen,)* borrowed his light from THEOCRITUS, HESIOD, and HOMER; as TERENCE did his from MENANDER. HORACE (though in a leſs degree) was beholden to PINDAR; and PHÆDRUS altogether to ESOP. The Fables in the *Greek*, are Diamonds in the rough; in the *Latin*, they are cut and poliſhed.

ÆSOPUS auctor quam materiam repperit,
Hanc Ego polivi verſibus ſenariis.

ESOP was a Philoſopher; and PHÆDRUS was a Poet. But they were both Slaves. LAFONTAINE was well born; and well educated; and was his own Maſter: (as much ſo as any Subject can be in FRANCE:) he was tolerably eaſy in his circumſtances: until inattention to his affairs—(the too common reproach of genius)—made him otherwiſe. A Penſion, however, and the Patronage of thoſe amongſt the Great of kindred ſouls, enabled him to live as much in the *Beau Monde* as was agreeable to a Man of Letters, naturally reſerved, and taciturne: for, except with ſelect friends, he ſpoke little. In large and mixed Companies, he was ſilent; making obſervations and reflections; to enable himſelf to ſpeak well afterwards—*on paper.*

Such were the advantages LAFONTAINE poſſeſſed.

And

And his Fables, the pleaſanteſt Satires that ever were penned, have been the adequate reſult.

When LAFONTAINE is the theme I know not how to leave off. And yet, the more I ſpeak of his Book, the leſs I am inclined to mention my own: which muſt be done, however, ſooner or later.

Having ſo very recently, and ſo highly extolled his Satire, what ſhall I ſay of mine?—That if it is not quite ſo ſtrong, it is not without force?—And of my [illegible] it, that if it is not quite ſo keen, it is not altogether without edge? In truth, I have not been ſo ambitious to ſhine, as anxious to pleaſe. But, my chief ſtudy has been to be *uſeful.* For, (as PHÆDRUS well obſerves,)—*Niſi utile eſt quod facimus, ſtulta eſt Gloria.*—"Unleſs our labours have a uſeful tendency, Applauſe is emptineſs."

A ſentiment ſo juſt ought to be engraven, by way of motto, upon every Author's inkſtand. For his own ſake, as well as for the Public's. The *Talents* ſpoken of in the Parable refer in particular to the *Faculties of the Mind*; for the miſapplication of which 'unprofitable Servants will be caſt into outer darkneſs.'

Happily for the World it grows refined in theory, however groſs it may be in practice. Which, though a ſeeming paradox, is certainly true. For, to the honour

nour of the age be it ſpoken, if we except—'The Trials for adultery,' which ought not to be publiſhed, and 'A Magazine or two,' which ought to be ſuppreſſed,—Literature is tolerably chaſte. The obſcene Productions, which ſo delighted our Anceſtors, would not only be hiſſed off the ſtage now, but they would not be admitted into the Cloſets of any, ſave old hackneyed Lechers, and thoughtleſs, diſſolute Apprentices.

Since, then, the *Men* are ſomewhat ſcrupulous in their lecture, to whom, or to what ſhall we aſcribe the general depravedneſs of Morals?—To the improper lecture of the *Women*?—To the pernicious influence of *NOVELS*?—Verily, I believe we may. *Novel-reading*, I take to be the ſource from whence corruption flows. Excepting the admirable *Novels* of RICHARDSON, FIELDING, GOLDSMITH, SMOLLET, BROOKE, BURNEY, and a few others, every thing which goes under that title ought to be burned by the Common Hangman.

If *Books of Chivalry* could be ſuppoſed to derange the intellects of ſuch a Man as QUIXOTE is deſcribed to be; how ſhould *Women-Girls* in the heigh day of their blood, when their reaſon is as feeble, as their paſſions are ſtrong, how ſhould they keep their ſenſes; when no other Books are put into their hands, but *Novels*; which are expreſsly calculated to make young folks

folks run riot. In *NOVELS only* Sin is made amiable, and depicted beautiful. There is not a Vice ſo odious but is therein palliated, or excuſed; and, not ſeldom, commended: no Crime ſo great but is therein authorized by a new Code, called "SENTIMENT." A word derived from *ſentir*, to feel; and is happily expreſſive of the fundamental principle of *Noveliſm*; which is, tha every one ſhould act from his own immediate feeling,—from his own whim, and fancy,—from the impreſſions of the moment; without regard to the eſtabliſhed forms of decency, morality, and religion. In ſhort, the doctrine of *Noveliſm* tends ſo immediately to debauch the mind, and, in due courſe, the body,—that I would as ſoon, a Son of mine ſhould marry a Woman out of a Brothel, as one whoſe conſtant lecture has been *NOVELS*.

On this ſubject I have written more at large in a Work which may one day appear. At preſent, having deplored the pernicious effects of *Novel-reading*, I have only to add, that, as I fear there is no antidote to this poiſon when once received into the mind,—no remedy for the Perſon infected with this peſtilence, ſo is there but one poſſible way of preventing the contagion ſpreading: and that is by the *Reviewers* continuing to watch over this, as well as the other departments of literature; ſounding the alarm, from time

to

to time: and noticing particularly the Houſes of the Bookſellers, and the Garrets of the Authors where the Plague rages with the greateſt violence.

The Reviewers are to be pitied, in that they are conſtrained, as literary Phyſicians, to viſit ſuch infectious Quarters, and have to touch petechial bodies; nevertheleſs, we are ſure, they will not ſhrink from their duty. It remains, then, with the Keepers of Circulating Libraries, and the Maſters and Miſtreſſes of Families to take care, not to give admiſſion to any *Novels* but thoſe which have a certificate of health, ſigned by the Reviewers.

As *Utility*, that is, the Improvement of Mankind, was the object I had chiefly in view in conſtructing theſe Fables, I took eſpecial care to found them on the ſolid ground of Religion. Although I was obliged, in conformity to the genius of Fable, to make uſe of the names and characters of the ethnic Mythology, the doctrines I have inculcated are thoſe of Chriſtianity.

My *political* Creed is ſuch as every thinking Reader muſt ſubſcribe to; for it is formed on the Principles laid down by your Predeceſſor BLACKSTONE, in his "*Commentaries on the Laws of England*;" and by YOURSELF, in the "*Elements of Juriſprudence*." At one

one and the ſame time am I a ſtrenuous Aſſertor of civil Liberty, and ready to take up arms, (if occaſion were) againſt the *Encroachments* of SOVEREIGN POWER,—but,– whilſt the KING confines himſelf within the limits preſcribed by the Conſtitution, he has not a more dutiful or allegiant ſubject than I am: nor any one who would ſooner arm in *his* defence.

As far as *Variety* goes towards keeping up the attention, I may venture to aſſure the Reader, he will not yawn over this Work: for, beſides the common tranſition of Fables, from one ſubject to another, I have made uſe of almoſt every kind of Metre. By changing the fabric of my Verſe ſo often, certainly I have conſulted the Reader's Liking more than my own advantage. For, by ſo much the more trouble it gave me, ſo much leſs chance I had of attaining to excellence. It is by uniform practice, and attention to one ſort of ſtyle, and one meaſure only, that an Author can acquire facility in writing. DR. JOHNSON has attributed POPE's excellence in verſification to this very circumſtance. And, I hope I may ſay it without offence to MR. HAYLEY, when his Muſe,—who had a graceful gait of her own,—attempted to trip it to ANSTEY's meaſure, ſhe made a very aukward, and ungraceful appearance. When BUTLER, who was ſo

ex-

excellent in one kind of metre that it has been called, after the name of his Hero, *hudibraſtic* verſe,—when BUTLER quitted that meaſure which was ſo eaſy and familiar to him, and attempted BOILEAU's, and other ſatires, in decaſyllabic verſe, his Pegaſus grew reſtif; and refuſed to obey the hand of its former Maſter. So difficult it is, if not impoſſible, for thoſe even of the very firſt rate abilities to excel more ways than one.

Why, then, (I ſhall be aſked) did not I take the prudent courſe which GAY has taken for his Fables, and ſtand a chance for excellence? Becauſe I deſpaired of attaining to his perfection; and therefore would not that my Work ſhould be put in compariſon with his.—And, becauſe, I had taken for Exemplar LAFONTAINE, whoſe varied meaſure was better adapted to my own whimſical and capricious genius.

Theſe Fables will be found to vary as much in Length as Metre. Some of them are of four or ſix lines only, and others of as many hundred. Theſe latter, I confeſs, are much, very much too long, though I could name, for precedent, the ingenious MR. MOORE; whoſe whole volume conſiſts of only ſixteen Fables.

It has been a queſtion with Commentators,—

'Whe-

Whether the *Moral* ſhould ſtand at the beginning, or at the end of the Fable?'—I make no ſcruple in anſwering,—Neither at one, nor the other, *invariably*.—But commonly at the end. For the Reflection grows more naturally out of the Fable, than the Fable out of the Reflection.

There is no neceſſity, however, for the Moral's ſtanding either at the beginning, or at the end; or apart from the Fable;—but as part of it. Oft times the Leſſon is inculcated to greateſt advantage in the Middle: or, is ſo intimately blended with the Story itſelf, as to require neither diſtinct place, nor characters of diſtinction. And at ſuch times, when one Moral is obvious to every Reader as he runs along; another, a partial one, may be afterwards pointed out, by the Author.

The Greek Fabuliſts, indeed, (or their *officious Editors,*) have tacked an Επιμυθιον at the end of every Fable. But, ſo diſguſtingly dry, flat, and inſipid are their reflections, that they are fit only for mere Children. The Latin ones are not quite ſo dull: but I muſt ſay, even PHÆDRUS himſelf is too formal and pedantic a Preceptor.

LAFONTAINE, with the advantage of being born in later, and more enlightened times, and under civilized manners, has reaped all the benefit to be expected therefrom. He has appropriated no particular place to Precepts, and to Gravity. Under the names

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and forms of Animals, he has deſcribed the modes of human life. His are not mere *Stories of Cocks and Bulls:* he turns Mens thoughts upon themſelves: laughing at the foibles, and laſhing the vices of Mankind. His *Fables* expoſe to us our Faults, and his *Morals* teach us to amend them.

Such, SIR, are the impreſſions I have received from the lecture of ancient and modern Fables. How far theſe of mine are conformable thereto,—I leave to You and the Public to decide. And for this, amongſt other reaſons, I publiſh a Volume only at a time; that, receiving the benefit of correction, I may ſend ſucceeding ones into the World with fewer imperfections.

Not that I pledge myſelf to follow this up immediately with more Fables, although I have ſo many by me. *Ne quid nimis*, is the motto of the Muſe my Patroneſs: who is not, like THALIA, always on a titter; nor ever whimpering, like MELPOMENE: but, whimſical, verſatile, various: never two days together in the ſame humour; and not often two hours:

Sed modo læta manet; vultus modo ſumit acerbos:
Et tantum conſtans in levitate ſua eſt.

By this deſcription you will take her, poſſibly, to be a terreſtrial Goddeſs; a fine Lady of this World.—No, Sir. *Ni me ludit amabilis inſania*, She is not only of the divine Siſterhood, Ολυμπια δωματ' εχεσαι,—but the Lady Abbeſs herſelf; CALLIOPE, *Regina*; ſkillful

ſkillful on all inſtruments. And I, her Votary, a thrummer upon many. As the Reader may find ſome day, to his *coſt*; if I ſhould be at the pains of collecting my ſcattered Leaves. Out of prudence, perhaps, I had better let them remain diſperſed; as the Sibyl, out of indolence, left hers.

Nec revocare ſitus, aut jungere carmina curat.

In this, SIR, I ſhould be moſt happy to have your judgement to direct me. At all times, and under all circumſtances, your criticiſms would be invaluable: but more particularly now; ſituated as I am; a Sojourner in a ſtrange Province. The only Perſon hereabout of ſuperior abilities, with whom I am at all intimate, has ſo little predilection for Poetry, that he is not acquainted even with the Works of the great HAYLEY. To have ſhown him my Fables in Manuſcript, by way of *amuſing* him, would have been to prove myſelf in reality as vain, as in burleſque ſometimes I would appear. To have read them to him for my own ſake, claiming his criticiſms as I went along, would have been to impoſe upon him a diſagreeable taſk, which our acquaintance was not of long ſtanding enough to warrant. Whereas I might without ſcruple tax a friendſhip of ſuch very old date as yours. When you can allow yourſelf relaxation from your ſeverer ſtudies, this Book will be much honoured by your regard. And let me beg of you to favour me with your free and full remarks upon it. Preſſed

Preſſed as the *Public Critics* are with Works of Literature, ſome of great merit, and others of importance, this little Volume cannot expect from them much notice: unleſs, indeed, it be from the CRITICAL REVIEWERS; who thought both my former Publications worthy of their particular note. Of their Account of the latter I ſhall beg leave to extract a Paſſage, not only becauſe I am proud of their general commendation, but am ready to acknowledge the juſtice of their partial cenſure.

" The old Tale of SOCRATES AND XANTIPPE, the *ſtormy Tale*
" terminated by the *Shower*, is humorouſly verſified in the little pam-
" phlet now before us. We need not enlarge on the ſubject, but
" muſt expreſs our approbation of the Author's talents in the burleſque
" ſtyle. MR. WALLBECK might have obtained more of our praiſe,
" if his humorous levity, in one or two paſſages, had been better re-
" ſtrained; though we ſhould add, that we have met with nothing
" very exceptionable. The following advice makes ample amends
" for any tranſitory error."——

(*Then follow the ſelected Stanzas.*)

The exceptionable words, to which my *Critical Admoniſher* alludes, were ſuch as firſt preſented themſelves to my indignant mind, but they ſhall certainly be altered before the *TALE* goes again to preſs.

To liberal Criticiſm I ſhall ever pay the greateſt deference; as you will find, whenever you favour me with yours.

I am, SIR,
Your much obliged Friend,
And obedient humble Servant,
THE AUTHOR.

FABLES;

ANCIENT and MODERN:

AFTER THE MANNER OF

LAFONTAINE.

FABLE I.

ESOP AT PLAY.

AS Esop was with boys at play,
A grave *Athenian* paſs'd that way;
And ſtraight began to mock at him:
'Was ever ſo abſurd a whim!—
'What will the Academics ſay,
'Hearing that Esop ſtoops to play
'With Children?—O, Minerva! when
'Will men behave themſelves like men?'
Th' apoſtrophe made Esop ſmile,
Who yet kept playing all the while.

'But, tell us, (the *Athenian* cries)—
'You who affect to be ſo wiſe,—
'What is your reaſon? Doubtleſs, you
'Some reaſon have for what you do.'

'*See you that unſtrung Bow that lays*
'*Beſide you?*'—Esop quaintly ſays.
'I ſee it plain enough: what then?'

'*But look at it, grave Sir, again.*'
'Pſhaw!—this is childiſhneſs: I ſee
'The Bow:—what anſwer is't to me?'
Esop at his impatience ſmiled:
'*Which of us, think you, is the child?*
'*Or,—ſhall I out with it at once,—*
'*Which of us, think you, is the dunce?*

'*Can any thing in nature ſhow*
'*My meaning better than that Bow?*
'*Were't always ſtrung, for ever bent,*
'*Its force elaſtic would be ſpent.*
'*But being, when unuſed, left looſe,*
'*'Tis ſtronger, fitter far for uſe.*

'*'Tis ſo exactly with the human mind:*
'*Who keeps it on the ſtretch for aye, will find*
'*Its ſtrength impair'd; and, when too late, repent*
'*It was not now and then with* play *unbent.*'

FABLE

FABLE II.

THE TWO CRABS.

A CRAB at bottom of the ocean
Was heard her daughter to deride;
'Arrah, my Dear; keep ſtill that motion:
'And don't walk forward all a-ſide.'

Young CRAB replies,—'Is't not a ſhame—
'*You* of all folks ſhould keep this bother?
'Pray, which of us is more to blame?
'*Who ſet th' example?*—I, or mother?'

So plain this Fable's moral is,
It cannot conſtrued be amiſs.
Exact not of your child what you
Find it impoſſible to do.

Bother,] This word in common uſe with the Iriſh, has a ſignification almoſt ſimilar to our *pother*; but of greater ſtrength, and energy.

FABLE

FABLE III.

The GRASSHOPPER *and the* ANT.

A GRASSHOPPER, who blithe and gay
Had danced the Summer months away,
Forgetting Winter was to come,
Laid no proviſion in at home:
Nor wheat, nor rye, or good or bad;—
No ſtock of any kind he had.

Shivering with cold, and pinch'd with want,
He hies him to the thriftier ANT;
'Dear Creature, be ſo kind (ſays he)
'To lend me from your granary
'Some twenty thouſand grains of wheat,—
'Barley, or any thing to eat.
'In Autumn next I'll pay the whole,
'With thanks:—I will, upon my ſoul.'

'*I cannot ſay,*——(*replies the* ANT)
'*Laſt harveſt was ſo very ſcant,*——
'*Whether I any have to ſpare.*
'*But, prithee, tell me firſt, where are*
'*Your pledges*;——*your ſecurity?*'

'What,

'What is't you mean;—to talk to me
'Of pledges, and ſecurity?—
'Good Maſter Cit, that's too abſurd:
'Is't not enough I pledge my word?
'We GRASSHOPPERS are Gentlemen,—
'Although we borrow now and then.'

'*From me far be it to diſpute*
'*The word of ſuch a well-born brute.*
'*An humble Citizen to ſcan*
'*The conduct of a Gentleman!—*
'*O fie.—But, if without offence,*
'*I might, in name of Common Senſe,*
'*Demand, great Sir, what have you done*
'*With all your wealth? Or, had you none?*
'*If of your own no ſtocks, nor lands*
'*You had, why not employ your hands,*
'*Or head, in Summer, to contrive*
'*How in the Winter you might live?*'

'That's true, (the GRASSHOPPER replies;)
'I ſhould have done't, had I been wiſe.
'Inſtead of which, the Summer through,
'Pleaſure alone I had in view:
'Frequented all the public places;
'Dreſs'd in embroidery, and laces;
'And ſtudied nothing but the graces:
'Talk'd with the Lords; danced with the Ladies,—
'Once with a Dutcheſs;—*who afraid is?*'

'*I wiſh*

'I wish you joy, with all my heart.
'Good morning, Sir:—you may depart.
'Your fortune must be far advanced
'With those fair Dames with whom you danced,

'Call at their doors; it were a sin,
'Should they refuse to let you in.
'What! Such a sprightly Spark as you,
'That caper'd all the Summer through!
'I'll lay my life on't, you can sing,
'Cold as the weather is, till Spring.
"To dance and sing"—'s a pretty trade:—
'Go to the Ladies;——who's afraid.'

FABLE

FABLE IV.

The OLD MAN *and* DEATH.

AN aged HIND returning from the wood
With faggots on his back, too great a load,
He let them fall, and, with the world at ſtrife,
Began in petulance on DEATH to call:—
'Ah! Would that DEATH, he who alleviates all,
'Would come, and put a period to my life!'

The hideous SKELETON before him ſtands,
As ſoon as call'd; and aſks him—'*His commands?*'—
(Shaking his dart) "*Now—ſhall I end your pain?*"—
The OLD MAN frighten'd turns his face away;
And ſcarce, with fault'ring accent can he ſay,—
'My faggots have fall'n off; pray lift them on again.'

——— Who would fardles bear
And groan and ſweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of ſomething after death,—
(That undiſcover'd country, from whoſe bourne
No Traveller returns,)—puzzles the will;
And makes us rather bear thoſe ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?

SHAKSPERE.

This admirable Reflexion of our immortal Bard's is ſo appoſite to the FABLE, that I have no doubt he had it in his *mind's eye*, when he penned that part of HAMLET's Soliloquy. For having inſerted it in the ſtead of any Moral I could have drawn, no Reader of ſenſe will find fault with me: and as to others,—who have no reliſh but for novelty; and who prefer every thing that is *new*, *becauſe* it is new;—I exclude them all together from the Temple of Taſte. Εκας, εκας ὁστε βεβηλοι.

FABLE

FABLE V.

The BOY ASLEEP *and* FORTUNE.

A Thoughtleſs SCHOOLBOY, tired with play,
Was ſleeping by a river's ſide:
FORTUNE, who chanced to paſs that way,
Waked him, and thus began to chide:

'Was ever little Urchin found
'In greater peril! Up, for ſhame:
'Had *you*, by your own fault, been drown'd,
'*I* had unjuſtly born the blame.'

'TIS the ſame ſtory with us all:
Whatever fooliſh things we do;—
Whatever ſcrapes we get into;—
Dame FORTUNE *to account we call.*

FABLE

FABLE VI.

The TWO CATS *and the* MONKEY.

AT Midnight, when the Novice ſleeps,
The luſty Friar from his cell
To the expecting Abbeſs creeps.
How they keep vigil,—need I tell?

Prowlers of every kind and ſort,
At dark, their hiding-places leave;
Some bent on miſchief; ſome on ſport:
Theſe to take pleaſure, thoſe to thieve.

ONE night, whilſt Goodman PLOUGHSHARE ſlept,
Two CATS into his larder crept,
Through broken pane; and ate their fill;
And carried prog away at will:
Small articles: but left behind
The larger;—much againſt their mind.
Some beef in ſalt; and flitch of bacon;
Good of their kind: or I'm miſtaken.
But nothing ſeem'd ſo well to pleaſe
Their nerves olfact'ry as a Cheeſe:

A STILTON one:—and I defy
All PARMA; and all ITALY;
And SCHOPZEGA; and GRUYIERES;—
(More famed for Cheeſes now, than Bears,)
To make a better. 'T was ſo good,
Our CATS, who Eating underſtood,
Declared, in all their lives that they
Ne'er took ſo good a one away.
They roll'd it round and round, and fain
Would paſs it through the broken pane:
They tried their utmoſt—but in vain.

The diſappointment much provoked
Their Catſhips; they their whiſkers ſtroked,
Indignantly; their teeth they gnaſh'd;
And ſwollen tails with fury laſh'd.

GRIMALKIN imprecations mumbled
In a low mewl; and growl'd, and grumbled;
But t'other, TABBY Reprobate,
In louder accents curs'd his fate.
" May furies,—demons,—mad dogs tear—
('Tis no new thing for Cats to ſwear)
" My vitals,—as I do this hair.—"
He ſtopp'd; and from his brindled cheſt
Tore hair enough to've made a neſt,
(Inſtead of male if he had been
A female,)—to have kitten'd in.

" Curſt

" Curſt fortune!—Shall we all night toil
" For nothing! Labour ſo, and moil,
" Torment us, tantalize and teaſe,
" With the vain hope of ſuch a cheeſe!

" If we can't compaſs it ere day,
" May LETHUM take my lives away;—
" All nine of 'em! My death is built on
" The diſappointment of this Stilton."

' Hold! impious Epicure;—(replies
' GRIMALKIN;)—" vent not blaſphemies.
' I've hit upon a way, I trow,
' To do it.'—" Have you? *Quomodo?*"—
' Obſerve. I'll do it by myſelf.'—
He ſaid; and roll'd it off the ſhelf.
Expedient fortunate: for, lo!
The Cheeſe, by falling, broke in two.
And, what, when whole it could not do,—
The window paſs,—at twice went through.

Superlative felicity!
What happier Cats on earth could be?
None, you would think.—O! ſad reverſe.
Thieving's attended with this curſe;
What, at the hazard of their lives,
Rogues get, not only never thrives,
But ev'n in ſharing, they fall out,
Nine times in ten, their ſpoil about.

The piece of Cheeſe, which 'twixt her paws
GRIMALKIN held, the larger was;
A very little; but enough
To put young TABBY in a huff.
From him, the moſt iraſcible
Of Cats, theſe ireful accents fell.
" Think not, ſo cunning as you are,
" To carry off that larger ſhare.
" I've often heard, and find it true,
" GRIMALKIN, there's no truſting you.
" You bring up thieves; and cheat 'em too.
" But fancy not, I am ſo young
" To let grey whiſkers do me wrong.
" No: you ſhall do me fully right;
" Give me that piece: or forthwith fight."

GRIMALKIN who not fighting loved;
And was not eaſy to be moved;
When he ſaw TABBY's choler riſe,
And lightning flaſhing from his eyes,
Reſolved if poſſible t' appeaſe
His fury, and yet keep the Cheeſe.
' Yes, TAB, you 're young,—and very young,
' To think that I would do you wrong.
' On no account would I offend,
' And much leſs cheat ſo dear a friend.

' If

'If I decline with you to fight
'It is not that I mean to ſlight
'Your years; be ſure, I know your worth;
'There's not a braver Cat on earth.
'But, 'twere a pity fight we ſhou'd;
'No;—I'll not ſpill ſuch precious blood.

'As to our ſhares, I do not know
'Mine larger is; but be it ſo;
'Recall to memory, if you pleaſe,
'Which of us firſt ſmelt out the Cheeſe:
'And by whoſe artifice and wit,
'We got, and are enjoying it.'

After much wrangling, noiſe, and pother;
Splutt'ring, and ſpitting at each other,
Till they were weary: they agreed
Straightway to JUSTICE PUG to ſpeed,
And before him their cauſe to plead.

The Parties to the JUSTICE come,
Are ſhown into his Worſhip's room:
Where in an elbow-chair he ſat,
Lolling with magiſterial ſtate.
'*Well, Sirs, what buſineſs brings you here?*—
'*What are thoſe parcels you have there?*'—
'''Shall I not ſwear 'em?'''—'*As you pleaſe:*
'*And, harkee!—don't forget your fees.*'

The

The Parties ſworn; the ſhillings paid;
GRIMALKIN waved his paw, and ſaid:
'May't pleaſe your Worſhip, TAB and I
'Agreed a Stilton Cheeſe to buy;—
'We bought one: took it home, and tried
'In equal portions to divide
'The ſame: and equal ſure they are;
'But TAB thinks mine the larger ſhare.
'I,—knowing your deciſions true,
'Moſt willingly appeal to you.'

"An' pleaſe your Worſhip, TABBY cries,
"This cream-lapper, with Tiger eyes—*
"But in his heart a very Mouſe,
"Would fain me—valorous TABBY,—chouſe.
"This coward wretch who dares not fight,
"Would cheat a Hero of his right.

"I come to you, Sir, for redreſs;
"Unwillingly, I muſt confeſs:
"For, rather I by force of *paw*
"Would battle it,—than force of Law."

PUG puffs his cheeks, and looking big,
Draws forward his enormous wig;

* *This cream-lapper, with Tiger eyes*—&c.
Οινοβαρες, κυνος ομμαΤ' εχων, κραδιην δ' ελαφοιο, &c.

Preſſing

Preſſing it cloſe: elſe might they ſee
Where his two auricles *ſhould be*:—
For, long time ſince were both his ears
Cut off, with certain wooden ſhears,
Yclept a Pillory, wherein
For theft, and other *petty* ſin,
Such as falſe-ſwearing, he had been.
Since made a JUSTICE, from belief
No one's ſo fit to catch a thief,
(As the old proverb ſays,) as He
That practiſed is in thievery.
Who elſe ſhould know their haunts ſo well?—
Their various arts, and tricks who tell?

All Magiſtrates the trade ſhould learn.
Theſe have been Rogues; and thoſe read BURN.
The worſt are they, who, from a turn
Litigious, get into the *Quorum*;
And drive their Neighbours all before 'em.
Some for the honour only pant:
And others occupation want.

There are, indeed,—(would more there were!)
Magiſtrates who the office bear
With dignity: on it reflect
A luſtre; and command reſpect.
Such we our Country's Worthies term:
Who, not officious are, but firm:

Who,

Who, to the Poor impartial law
Deal out;—and keep the Rich in awe.
Who, nor connexions have, nor friends,
So long as any Suit depends;
But ſit, whoe'er the Parties be,—
In foro CONSCIENTIÆ.
Who, not intimidated are
By Ruffians' threats; but fearleſs wear
The ſword; and no Delinquents ſpare:
For cowardice, or mercy ſhown,
Through a falſe tenderneſs, to one,
Thouſands and thouſands has undone.
He who the feelings of his heart
Conſults, can act no public part.

But, you muſt not miſconſtrue me
—Into undue ſeverity.
When the Caſe will of doubt admit,
You muſt the Priſoner acquit.
'Better that twenty guilty ſhou'd
'Eſcape, than we ſhould ſhed the blood
'Of one man innocent.' So ſays
The Engliſh Law, to England's praiſe.

I would aſk pardon of the Reader,
For turning here a Special Pleader;
But that the Muſe's aberration
Is for the good of all the nation.

Ap-

Apparent my deſign, I truſt is,
A wholeſome Lecture upon Juſtice.
Into COMMISSION I would urge
Wiſe Men: and Fools, and Scoundrels ſcourge.

But,—to my Fable.—PUG, who loved
Good Cheeſe, was by the odour moved:
And, coughing conſequentially,
Says to the Clerk; '*Hem!—Let me ſee*
'*This Stilton.*—MITTIMUS!—*Where are*
'*My Scales?—I ought to have a pair.*'

''' You *ought:* (the Clerk ſarcaſtic ſays:)
''' There was a pair in DIGNUS' days.
''' But the firſt time your Worſhip came
''' You bent, and after broke the beam.'''

'*It is no matter,* PUG *replies;*
'*I have, thank* JOVE, *a pair of eyes*
'*That, without ſpectacles, can ſee*
'*Which of theſe pieces larger be.*
'*Ay:—this is it:—'tis, therefore, fit*
'*I nibble off a little bit.—*
'*Delicious!—But, I have not ta'en*
'*Off quite enough:—I'll try again.—*
'*Odſo! I've ta'en too much, I trow:—*
'*The other ſeems the bigger now.*

'*The only difficulty lies*
'*In bringing t'other to this ſize.*
'*I'll do ſo.——Poh!—How bad a gueſs!—*
'*This which too large was, is the leſs.*

'*I'll try again;—I'll ſpare no pains,*
'*Whilſt any of the Cheeſe remains.*
'*To ſay the worſt of it, 'tis good;*
'*And is, beſides, my favourite food.*
'*Happily, too; my appetite*
'*Is keen: I'll have another bite.*'

The CATS at length began to ſmoke,
But reliſh'd not, the MONKEY's joke:
Their ſhares ſo rapidly diminiſh'd,
Two other bites the whole had finiſh'd:
Which made GRIMALKIN thus addreſs,
In haſte, the JUSTICE;—'Sir, you gueſs
'So very badly; if you pleaſe,
'We will ourſelves divide the Cheeſe:—
'I rather ſhould have ſaid—the *Rind*;
'For cheeſe it would be hard to find.
'Ah! Would we had been ſatisfied;
'And not YOUR WORSHIP to applied!
'If it is thus you juſtice do;
'Tis the laſt time we'll come to you.
'We did not mean to cram your maw
'Voracious:—No:—we wanted *Law.*'

'*Ye Oafs! Ye know not what ye want,*
'Law!—*Is not* Law *a Cormorant?*'—

'It ſeems ſo, Sir:—but pray you ſpare
'The reſt: the Law has had her ſhare.'

'*Firſt*;—*have you caſh to pay your fees?*
'*If not*,—*the remnant of the Cheeſe*
'*Muſt go my Clerk to ſatisfy.*
'MITTIMUS *takes the fees*;—*not I.*'

"E'en take it, then;—and, Sir; if e'er
"We come again to you, to ſhare
"Our property,—we'll pay you double,—
"Ay, treble charges, for your trouble.
"We underſtand *your* Law;—we ſmoke you:—
"Keep the Cheeſe rind, and—
(*aſide*)——"may it choak you."

FABLE

FABLE VII.

The MILLER, *and his* MULE.

WRetched the Land which is War's theatre!
Nobles and Peaſants live in conſtant fear.
At the leaſt noiſe, at every little ſtir,
They ſtart, and cry—'*The Enemy is near.*'

A MILLER once, alarm'd, urged on his BEAST;
"Haſte! or we ſhall be ta'en. O, dire diſaſter!"—
The MULE replies,—'*I'm not in ſo much haſte:*—
'*I cannot be worſe off, whoe'er's my Maſter.*'

There is one way, and only one, to bind
Dependants:—Be compaſſionate, and kind.
When *Subjects* are thought worth their *Prince's* care,
Then will they prove how well attach'd they are.
O'er BRITAIN ever *ſhould* a Tyrant reign;
And dare attack our Liberties again:
I truſt there will be Patriots in the Land
Ready to wreſt the Sceptre from his hand.
But, thanks to Heaven, we've now upon the Throne,
A KING who makes our Intereſts his own.
Long may he live:—and *HIS SUCCESSOR* prove
Diſcreet, and worthy of his People's Love.

FABLE

FABLE VIII.

The BUTTERFLY *and the* DOVE.

A BUTTERFLY, though in decline
Of life, ſtill vaunted to a DOVE;
'He was a gallant Libertine.'
And laugh'd at Conſtancy in Love.

'Oh! what a contraſt I could draw
'Betwixt my gay, and your dull life!
'Each pretty BUTTERFLY I ſaw
'I kiſs'd:—you've only kiſs'd your wife.

'Tis true, times are a little changed;
'When young I had them at my call;
'From one to other freely ranged:—
'Now they avoid me, one and all.'

'*Yes:—you have much to boaſt, in ſooth!—*
'*The* DOVE *replies, in ſatire bold.*
'*With Harlots you have paſs'd your youth:*
'*And they diſpiſe you, now you're old.*

'*How*

'*How much more happily We live,*
'*Whom, as inſipid, you deſpiſe:*
'*But you miſtake; we* DOVES *can give*
'*Example to you* BUTTERFLIES.

'*Inſtead of your unhallow'd fires;*
'*Your guilty, tranſitory joy;*
'HYMEN *improves our chaſte deſires:*
'*Felicity without alloy.*

'*Love which in youth takes kindly root,*
'*Does every day more vigorous prove.*
'*In age itſelf it yields us fruit:*
'*'Tis FRIENDSHIP grafted upon LOVE.*'

FABLE

FABLE IX.

The DOG *and his* SHADOW.

A LURCHER, a notorious thief,
From ſhambles ſtole a piece of Beef:
To take it home, he needs muſt paſs
A Stream: the ſtream, as ſmooth as glaſs,
Preſented ſeemingly to view
Another Dog; like loaded, too:
Forthwith a plunge the LURCHER made,
In greedy hope to ſpoil the SHADE:
And as he open'd wide his chops
To do ſo, down his own piece drops.

This *doggiſh* Character is meant
For every one, who, not content
With his poſſeſſions, caſts an eye
Towards his neighbour's property.

To thoſe whom jeeringly we call
NABOBS—what uſe their ill-got ſpoil?

Loaded

Loaded with *Wealth* if they return
From INDIA, they for *Honours* burn.
That, which they might enjoy, they loſe
By the extenſion of their views.
Nobles in ſplendour they outvie:
Build Palaces; and Boroughs buy;—
Till brought again to poverty.

Much might they with their fortunes do;
Be liked;—almoſt reſpected too.
But, far from being courteous, they
Grow more imperious every day.
So far from ſtriving to do good,
They're curſes to their neighbourhood.
And, living to no worthy end,
Die without having made a Friend.

FABLE

FABLE X.

The FOX *and the* WOLF.

BY ſome miſchance poor RENARD fell,
Heels-over-head, into a Well.
At the laſt gaſp almoſt he lay,
When he heard ſome one paſs that way:
And juſt had ſtrength enough to yelp;—
" Help,—charitable Pagan;—help!"

The WOLF look'd down, and though he found
The wretched Creature nearly drown'd,
He leiſurely harangued him;—' Pray,
' What were you doing, Sir, this way?
' Oft as I've prowl'd this Country o'er,
' I never met you here before:
' And now in what condition met!
' 'Tis ten to one but you are wet.
' How fell you in?'
" Nay, never waſte
" Time in enquiry:—prithee, haſte
" To help me. When I'm *out*,—I'll tell
" By what misfortune *in* I fell."

How People flock about a Stranger
In the Streets dying, or in danger!
'Tis CURIOSITY, *I fear,*
More than COMPASSION, *draws 'em there.*

FABLE XI.

The FARMER, *the* FOX, *and the* DOG.

BEFORE one hires a Houſe, 'tis good
T' enquire about the Neighbourhood.
None but a Thief himſelf would chooſe
To live amongſt the DUKE'S-PLACE JEWS.

I ſhould not like to take a Farm
Where Foxes, Wolves, and Vermin ſwarm.
Not only 'bout one's grounds they roam,
By night and day;
And ſure as Kids, or Lambkins ſtray,
Make 'em their prey;—
But viſit even our chicken-coops at home.

NATHLESS, a FARMER (ſays the Fable)
So wary was, a Fox in vain,
Week after week, was uſed to watch
The poultry yard; and was not able
A ſingle ſtraggling Chick to catch:
He had his 'labour only for his pain.'
"*Safe bind,*
"*Safe find.*"
So ſays the proverb; and ſo thought our HIND.

He

He every night in henhouſe puts
His fowls: and doors and windows ſhuts.
RENARD, in hope to find ſome place unbarr'd,
Comes every night into the FARMER's yard:
Into each hole, and corner pries,
Not even except the Sties:
For he has no diſlike to Pig,
If very nice, and not *too big*:
For the ſame reaſon too, the Glutton
Loves Lamb, but cannot *manage* Mutton.
Nought comes amiſs that's portable:
But if his Fox-ſhip were to chooſe,
With poultry he would deck his table;
Turkey, or fowl;—or duck, or gooſe.
For this he comes night after night;
Moon, or no moon; pitch-dark, or light;
Sundays,—Saint-days,—and Holidays;
All times of year; all nights of week;
RENARD's no *Jew*;—(JOSEPHUS ſays;)—
(And let ME add)—no *Catholic*.
If all be faſt, he does but ſtay
To curſe himſelf;—that is,—to ſay
A pray'r or two—the backward way.

To ſay one's prayers the backward way,] Is not to be taken literally; as beginning with 'Amen,' and finiſhing with the firſt word; but in its figurative ſenſe. When any one, inſtead of humbly acquieſcing in the diſpenſations of Providence, calls their fitneſs in queſtion;—ſuch an impious Remonſtrance may be termed "Saying one's prayers the backward way."

'How

'How hard my fate, O, partial JOVE!
'Is this your univerſal Love?
'Shall ſuch a deſpicable race
'As Cocks and Hens your favour reap;
'Well fed by day; and have a place
'Wherein at night ſecure to ſleep?—
'Whilſt *I*, of better parts and worth,
'Am forced ſo many miles to roam
'For food: then, hide me in the earth;
'A cold uncomfortable home.'

Inſolent Wretch! To dare profane
The equity of JOVE, becauſe
Of other Creatures care was ta'en,
That they not fell beneath his paws.

It happ'd, howe'er, the FARMER having kept
Late market once, came home with wine in's head;
Of ſenſe and cuſtomary prudence reft,
Leaving his doors unlock'd he went to-bed.

To make my ſtory ſhort:—The Fox,
Without or forcing bars or locks
The Hen-rooſt enter'd: you may gueſs,—
(For it would tire the Muſe to tell,)
How many millions, more or leſs,
To glut his maw and fury fell.
Sure ſuch a day,—nor night, I ween,
By Sun or Moon was ever ſeen!—

Unleſs

Unleſs it was when DIOMED
  Fell upon RHESUS by ſurpriſe;
And cut off many a Thracian's head,
  Ere it had time to ope its eyes.
PHOEBUS turn'd pale, as well he might,
At ſuch a ſanguinary ſight.
'*Pſhaw! What is* PHOEBUS *to the tale?*—
'*How turn'd the* FARMER? *Was he pale?*'

Unleſs it was when DIOMED, *&c.*] This is not the Incident by which LAFONTAINE choſe, in his burleſque way, to illuſtrate the mighty Slaughter; but I think it more appoſite than either of thoſe which he has ſelected, from HOMER. That the Reader, however, may judge between us, I will tranſcribe both his paſſages.

Tel, et d'un ſpectacle pareil
APOLLON *irrité contre le fier* ATRIDE,
Ioncha ſon champ de morts. On vit preſque détruit
L'oſt des Grecs; et ce fut l'ouvrage d'une nuit.
  Tel encore autour de ſa tente
  AJAX *à l'ame impatiente,*
De moutons et de boucs fit un vaſte débris,
Croyant tuer en eux ſon concurrent ULYSSE,
  Et les auteurs de l'injuſtice
  Par qui l'autre emporta le prix.
Le RENARD, *autre* AJAX, *aux volailles funeſte,*
Emporte ce qu'il peut, laiſſe étendu le reſte.

Though I flatter myſelf I have been more happy than LAFONTAINE in the parrallel I have drawn; I pray the Reader not to miſconſtrue me into the preſumption of coping generally with ſo great a Maſter. But,—great Maſter as he is, I ſcorn to be his mere Copyiſt. No:—though I have on many Subjects taken outlines from him, and on all profeſs myſelf his Imitator, I truſt I ſhall not be found ſervilely ſo. His *ſtile*,—his *manner* is what pleaſes me; but I beg leave to *think* for myſelf.

Patience,

Patience, good Sir; and you ſhall hear.
Soon as he came the Hen-rooſt near,
And found the portal ope, aghaſt he ſtood:
Then, caſting fearfully his eyes around,
Saw walls and perches ſtain'd with chicken blood;
And many a mangled carcaſe ſtrew'd the ground.
Ah, me!—ah *him!* (I mean)—who eyed
The ſcence of carnage; petrified
Almoſt with grief; elſe had he cried.
But, he bethought him ſoon to call
His Servants round, and ſcold them all.
For ſo egregious is Man's pride,
With moſt of us 'tis cuſtomary,
Fall out what will, what will miſcarry,
T' excuſe ourſelves,—blame all the world beſide.

Poor TRAY, who chanced to be at hand,
Received the heavieſt reprimand.
'And *you*, you good-for-nothing Dog,
'To lay as ſenſeleſs as a log;
'And not alarm us! not one yelp!—
'You ſhall be hang'd, you worthleſs Whelp.'

"Sir, (replies TRAY,)—'twould ill become
"Me to put arguments too home:—
"A four-legg'd Brute make an oration
"Againſt a Lord of the Creation!—

"Elſe,—

" Elſe,—I'd one queſtion aſk;—no more.—
" *Who* was't left ope the Henhouſe door?
" Had that been faſt, no thief had ventured
" To touch the latch; much leſs have enter'd.
" I'd have bark'd loud enough to rouſe
" The greateſt *Drunkard* in the Houſe."
TRAY argued well, we muſt allow;—
Too well;—a Tyrant cannot bear
Unpleaſant truths ſhould reach his ear.
So far from willing to avow
His fault; the FARMER ſeized on TRAY,
And hung him up that very day.

BY way of Epilogue, I'll tell you, Maſters,
What this long Fable meant:
The only method to prevent
Robberies, and other ſuch Diſtaſters,
Is,—'*To get early home; keep cool the head:*
'*Shut all the doors yourſelf: and go the laſt to bed.*'

FABLE

FABLE XII.

The MOUNTAIN *in* LABOUR.

PARNASSUS in Labour,
Alarm'd every Neighbour;
The MUSES, and even APOLLO.*
Well might it aſtound
Poor Mortals all round,
Expecting an Earthquake would follow.

LUCINA in waiting;
And Goſſips a-prating,—
"Good lack! what a terrible bout!"
Credibile Dictu?———
(Dan PHAEDRUS I ſtick too;—)
A minikin MOUSE tumbled out.

This Fable regards
Ourſelves, Brother Bards;
When Pegaſus ſets off too faſt.
Who ſpurs at beginning;—
May fancy he's winning;—
But knocks the old hack up at laſt.

* *Alarm'd the* MUSES *and* APOLLO.] It has been ſaid JOVE himſelf was frightened: Ωδινεν ορος. ΖΕΥΣ δ' εφοβειτο:—thinking, perhaps, the Giants were moving Mountains again. But as Poets have more to do with PARNASSUS, than with PELION or OSSA, I have taken the Fable in the ſame ſenſe HORACE has.

FABLE

FABLE XIII.

The DOG, *and the* CROCODILE.

WE Men by reaſon, Brutes by inſtinct know,
Into what Company 'tis ſafe to go.
Yet,—with our boaſted reaſon, vaunted ſenſe,
How oft do we miſplace our confidence.
To Widows tears we truſt, and Harlots ſmiles:—
But DOGS are never fond of CROCODILES.

Theſe dreadful Creatures,—(Crocodiles I mean,)—
About the Nile ſo frequently are ſeen,
That Dogs compell'd by thirſt extreme to drink,
Not without caution venture to the brink:
Nor at one place dare lap till they have done;
But ſhift their ground, ſtill lapping as they run.

A CROCODILE addreſs'd a DOG one day:—
'Why in ſuch haſte?—I prithee, honeſt TRAY,
'Let us confabulate a little.———Nay!
'Now you 're unſociable.—Why run away?
'If you 'll not talk; e'en ſtop, and drink your fill.

"Thank you, (ſays TRAY;) another time I will:
"But in good ſooth, I am ſo very ſhy,
"I cannot drink when CROCODILES are by."

FABLE XIV.

The WOLF'S REMONSTRANCE.

A WOLF paſs'd by a Shepherd's cot,
Juſt as a Sheep's-head ſmoking hot,
Tongue, Brains, and all, was put on table.
'Ye two-legg'd Animals! (ſays he,)
'Is 't fit ye ſhould find fault with me,
'Who are yourſelves ſo culpable?

'When at your Feaſts ye dine, or ſup,
'Ye eat whole Geeſe and Chickens up:
'Oft have I caught you in the fact.
'Nay;—and I tell you to your face,
'GOODY; I heard you *once* ſay grace.—
'For ſhame!—What,—glory in the act?

'If *I*— a hungry WOLF, alack!—
'Now and then take a little ſnack,
'Of Kid, or Calf, or Lamb, or Mutton;—
'Some Cur the neighbourhood alarms;
'And ye againſt me take up arms,
'Becauſe,—forſooth, I am a *Glutton*.'

AS inconſiſtent Men tow'rds Men:
Yet juſt we think ourſelves, as wiſe.
Keen enough *others* faults to ken,
Againſt our *own* we ſhut our eyes.

FABLE

FABLE XV.

The RATS *in* COMMON-HALL.

IN ENGLAND—much about the time
When Tyranny was in its prime—
But why ſhould Engliſhmen be pain'd
By recollecting now who reign'd
So long ago? No; let it paſs:
'Tis bootleſs to lament what *was*.
Beſides, the Story tells as well
Of BEASTS; and is more laughable.

IN days of yore, the RATS, a Nation
Of conſequence in the Creation,
Inhabiting our Iſle, complain'd
How ſavage was the CAT that reign'd:
Norman by birth: GRIMALKIN hight:
Stranger to every ſoft delight.
The chace was all he underſtood,—
And War; and much he joy'd in blood:
So much, that every day he ſlew
A Subject RAT; and ſometimes two.
And not content with murdering, *eat*,
And thought them moſt delicious meat.
Lit'rally ſo; not, as we ſay,
French Slaves are fed on every day.

LOUIS,

LOUIS, we know, cannot devour
His Subjects, but by metaphor.
No more an *Anthropophagus*
Is He than NORTH, who draws from us
Our deareſt blood:—our caſh, I mean.
His Impoſts make us wond'rous lean;—
The richeſt of us: but the Poor
No longer can his gripe endure.
Is 't fit they periſh, to ſupport
Him;—or THE GREATEST MAN at Court?
But—hold thy too licentious tongue,
My Muſe:—The KING *can do no wrong*.
We muſt not thence too much infer.
Alack! We know, His MINISTER,
And PRIVY COUNSELLORS—*can err*.
Elſe ſhould we not, as now we do,
This hateful, hopeleſs War purſue.

But

We muſt not thence too much infer.] In Abſolute Monarchies the language of ſervile adulation ſays, '*Indigna digna habenda ſunt, REX quæ facit.*' But our maxim, that 'THE KING *can do no wrong*'—means only, that whatever may be amiſs in the conduct of public affairs is not chargeable perſonally on the KING, but on his MINISTERS.

See BLACKSTONE's COMMENTARIES; the beſt-digeſted Code of the beſt Laws that ever were promulgated.

This hateful, hopeleſs War.] The War with AMERICA—(in which we were engaged when I wrote this Fable)—was certainly a *hateful* one, becauſe we were fighting againſt our Kindred. Yet mean I not to adduce it as a charge of criminality againſt our then MINISTER; certainly not. It was a War of neceſſity,—not of choice,

But 'tis digreſſing from the point:
Talking of Miniſters and Kings,
And politics, and ſuch like things;
My Fable 's ſadly out of joint.

Yet, ſhall the Gauls exemplify
How the poor RATS were doom'd to die.
E'en as when Gallic Cooks prepare,
On great occaſions extra fare
For LOUIS' Court: to marſhy ground,
And ſtagnant waters Paris round,
The Royal Frog-catchers reſort,
On murder bent,—which they call ſport.

Ev'n

choice. The outrage committed by the Boſtonians, was an act of determined Rebellion, and Defiance: it was the Guantlet AMERICA threw down; and we ſhould have been Daſtards not to have taken it up. But,—as I approve his courage who accepts a challenge, I blame his foolhardineſs who continues the fight when his ſtrength is exhauſted, and he has no chance of victory: or, if by miracle he ſhould prove victorious, his triumph would be but momentary; and the conteſt muſt neceſſarily be renewed, and he at laſt defeated. Such was our ſituation: and therefore *hopeleſs* was the War.

The COLONIES were Limbs, or rather Excreſcences of the BRITISH EMPIRE, out of all proportion with the Body. Sooner or later they muſt have fallen from us. What we have now to lament, is, the manner in which they were ſevered; by dilatory operations, which have drained us of more blood than we ſhall recruit in ages.—This miſchief—(to drop the metaphor—) ſeems imputable to LORD NORTH, who neither had the ſpirit requiſite for carrying on a War, nor magnanimity enough to make Peace.

Frog-catching ſport.] It was my misfortune once to paſs a day in a miſerable Village in FRANCE, where the only Book I could meet with

Ev'n ſo the RATS GRIMALKIN chaſes:
Finds out their haunts, and hiding-places:
And if upon them unawares
He pops, moſt royally he fares.

So oft, indeed, by ſtratagem
Feline he circumvented them;
Had it not been that fornication
Was, as at preſent 'tis, in faſhion;—
That nature and night work ſupplied
Young ones, as faſt as old ones died;
None had been living now to tell
How many of their brethren fell.

They fell; but not without ſome vain
Attempts GRIMALKIN to reſtrain.
Many a goodly project they
Eſſay'd; and threw much time away.

with was titled "DIVERTISSEMENTS CAMPAGNARDS." Amongſt other goodly Diverſions, '*Frog-catching*' being ſet forth, I had the curioſity to dip into it. "The *Chaſſeur* (ſays the Author) "ſhould be provided with water-proof Boots; and a Trident, or "three-barbed Spear: for with ſuch a weapon NEPTUNE ſtrikes "the Leviathan, *quand il va a la Chaſſe.*"——What a glorious thought!—A SEA-GOD hunting *Leviathans*—in apt compariſon to a BARON catching *Frogs* in his own Marſh!

In any other than a French Writer, I ſhould have taken it for burleſque. But he ſeemed to be in ſerious earneſt. And never, I dare ſay, had he read a page of the Batrachomyomachia, though ſome of its lines correſpond in part with his deſcription.

Κνημιδας μεν πρωτα περι κνημησιν εθηκαν.
Σειονιες λογχας, &c.

At

At length a City Genius hit
Upon the mode of doing it:—
Or, thinking ſo;—reſolved to call
His fellow Cits to Common-Hall:—
Waſh-houſe yclept, in vulgar phraſe.
And waſh-houſe it might be o-days;
But when the tubs were put to rights,
Served for their Common-Hall o-nights.

Precepts were ſent about the Town;
"That every RAT in his fur gown
"Should meet one certain day—I mean
"One night."—For fear of being ſeen.
For though by BILL OF RIGHTS they cou'd
Meet, and talk nonſenſe when they wou'd;
GRIMALKIN watched with jealous eye
Encroachments on his Royalty.
He held that Subjects ſhould incline 'em
To Kingſhip, as a *jus divinum*.
But leſt poor patriots ſhould prate
Againſt his Dignity, and State;
Call him unthrifty, or unwiſe;
And wiſh to cut off his ſupplies;
He thought it well to let them know
Th' extent of duty which they owe;—
Ev'n to their fortunes, and their blood.
If any one diſpute it wou'd
He ſhould find which of them the longer
Talons, or teeth had, ſharper, ſtronger.

This

This argument the beſt that he
Could uſe to favour Tyranny,
Kept them,—(as Standing Armies do
Men-Mice,—) in awe: except a few,
Who now and then dared machinate,
And meddle with affairs of ſtate.

The Summons iſſued for a Guild
With terrour half the City ſill'd.
The phraſe "*On Special Buſineſs*" they
Miſconſtrue one or other way.
By it the Gluttons underſtand,
Or fear a Famine in the Land:
Puzzled, what meaſures ſhould be ta'en
To regulate the price of grain.

The diſmal Politician ſtrokes
His whiſkers, ſhakes his head, and croaks.
"Flat-bottom'd Boats are coming over:—
"Hey, Brother! What 's the news from DOVER?"

The Merchant deep in others Books,
To ſome relief of *Intereſt* looks.
"Government would do well to low'r
"The uſe of caſh from five to four."
The rich one thinks 'the State ſhould fix
'The rate of intereſt at ſix.
'If 'tis a queſtion of finance,
'I *could* a plumb or two advance:—

'But

'*SUBSCRIPTION* buſineſs ſhould it be,
'No doubt, they will remember me,
'Who have ſubſcribed ſo conſtantly.
'Elſe will I openly declare
'How much I hate this waſteful war.
'I hate the *War*.—Yet muſt I own,
'I love, moſt dearly love a *LOAN*.
'*Ten per Cent* clear of brokerage paid!—
'But, then,—New *Taxes* muſt be laid:
'Heavy ones, too.—But, *Ten per Cent*
'On Money *nominally lent*
'Conſoles *Subſcribers*.—To be ſure,—
'*Taxes* hurt others, Rich, and Poor.
'The Nation has a right to curſe
'The Man who holds the Public Purſe;
'But whilſt we *favour'd Cits*, and *Men*
'*In Parliament* ſuch profits gain,
'To us, at leaſt, the matter 's clear,—
'*We* have an able Financier.'

The Man who holds the Public Purſe.] THE COMMONS are *conſtitutionally* the Public's Stewards; but as long as the MINISTER can *ſecure* a Majority, He is *virtually* the ſole Manager.

Amongſt the many *Abuſes* which MR. BURKE's admirable, and ever-memorable BILL went to *reform*, I wonder he did not touch upon the moſt profuſe expenditure of the Public's Money, and at the ſame time the moſt fatal mode of Bribery that could be deviſed:—I mean—the MINISTER's diſpoſal of the LOANS. That he ſhould negotiate the Buſineſs is ſo far fitting; but he ought to be *impeachable for giving it to*, and every Member ſhould *forfeit his ſeat for receiving*—any part of the LOAN. No MINISTER will ever want *Supporters* for carrying on a War, whilſt War enables him to raiſe the *Wages of Corruption*.

The City RATS reſolve, whate'er
The Buſineſs, to attend the May'r.

The time appointed come, they meet—
O, wonderful!—to talk;—not eat.
The Conſtables are placed about
The doors, to keep the rabble out.

Silence proclaim'd, SOREX, the May'r,
Than whom none *fill'd* ſo well the Chair.
Wags his fore paws, like turtle fins;
Hems twice,—ſpits thrice,—and then begins:
" Gemmen:—I ſay:—I underſtand—
" Some weighty buſineſs—is in hand:—
" If he be here who made requeſt
" For meeting—let him ſpeak his beſt."

Now roſe a pert young Alderman-
-ic RAT; and thus his Speech began.
' Since by your ſuffrage, Fellow Cits,—
' (But,—lackaday!—the May'r 's in fits.
' Too great exertion, as I fear,
' In waddling from his Manſion here
' Has quite exhauſted him. No wonder:
' With ſo much fleſh, ſuch thick Robes under:
' This turtle feeding ſhortens lives.
' Poor SOREX!—O, but—he revives.
' I hope, my Lord, you 're not the worſe.—
' Pray lend an ear to my diſcourſe.)

Since,

'Since, Fellow Cits, by your accord
'I was brought in for Patriot Ward,
'Whole days and nights, weeks, months and years
'I 've paſs'd oppreſs'd with Public Cares.
'Awake,—aſleep, in,—out of bed,—
'The City's welfare in my head.
'Againſt how many Scutages,
'Aids, Talliages, Carrucages,
'Have I not clamour'd loud, and long?
''Tis very well my lungs are ſtrong.
'I have,—which ſome will folly call,—
'Ruin'd myſelf, to ſerve you all.
'So much on public buſineſs bent,
'I cared not how my fortune went.
'But, ſince your favour ſtill I boaſt,
'I think my fortune lent, not loſt.
'You are too generous, I 'm ſure,
'To let a Patriot long be poor.
'Earneſt, indeed, already you
'Have given of what you mean to do.
'And I 'm as proud to wear, as own
'The honour of this Scarlet Gown:
'Which flowing graceful from my ſhoulders,
'Envy excites in all beholders.

Scutages, Talliages, &c.] Names under which the Kings of the Norman and Saxon Lines extorted money from their Subjects.

'This

'This my firſt wiſh ambitious gain'd;
'This ladder's lower round attain'd;
'I flatter me ere long to mount
'Aloft, and ſet aſtride upon 't:—
'Without offence His Lordſhip to.
'The May'ralty is not my view.
'I rather would be Chamberlain;
'And keep the City's Purſe. And then,
'If there 's no indecorum in 't,—
'I would at one more honour hint;
'The higheſt honour you can give;—
'The welcomeſt I can receive;—
'To be—your REPRESENTATIVE.
'Which once attain'd, I vow and ſwear
'To make my Country all my care:
'My zeal and lungs at conſtant work;
'I 'll out-face FOX, and out-talk BURKE.'

Tired of his prate, a LIVERY-RAT
Kimbo'd his arms, and cock'd his hat:
"If this be all, Friend Prate-a-pace,
"*I 'm off*.—Who will may have my place."

To out-face FOX.] It is not meant to characterize MR. FOX as an impudent, but as a bold Man:—one who dares confront any Miniſter:—one fit to be the Leader of a great Party, keeping in awe the Servants of the Crown.

And out-talk BURKE.] Nor would I inſinuate that MR. BURKE is ever tedious. At leaſt he was not ſo ſome years ſince, when I frequented the Houſe; (as a Gallery Man;—*Auditor tantum.*) I have heard him ſpeak for three hours together; but, ſo far from thinking he ſpoke too long, I never thought he ſpoke long enough.

'Your

'Your patience, worthy Sir, I pray;—
'Something,——what was 't?——I had to ſay.
'In ſooth, I 'm ſorry to appear
'Tedious to any Perſon here.
'But this ſame *Oratory* hath
'So many a tempting, devious path,
'Where Rats of Genius may for hours
'Amuſe themſelves with culling flow'rs.——'

"Say, rather *Talking* is a Maze,
"Where the illogic Blockhead ſtrays,
"Without or Senſe, or Reaſon's clew,
"Or Method to direct him through."

'I 'll try my beſt to be conciſe;
'And tell you, Fellows, in a trice
'Why I thought proper now to call
'You Livery here to Common Hall.
'The ſubject is what all ſhould feel;
'For it imports the Common-weal:
'Yet, to the City's dire diſgrace,
'We have among us ſome ſo baſe—
'They for the Public little care,
'Unleſs themſelves in danger are:
'Safe, they no meaſures take to free
'From perils the Community.
'Nay more; of their indiff'rence vain,
'They borrow fallacy from Men:—

"*That*

" *That Every-body buſineſs is*
" *Nobody's :*"—vile, falſe reaſ'ning this!
' A generous Rat would rather learn—
' *That every one's is his concern :*
' And would his treaſures waſte and blood,
' So he could do the Public good.
' But, ah! It would be hard to find
' Cits now of patriotic mind.
' Extinct the courage which was wont
' To animate us.—Fie upon 't!
' Luxury, and Laſciviouſneſs
' Pervade all ranks. Ye 're fond of Dreſs,
' And Revelry:—of Balls, and Feaſts:
' And get as drunk as human Beaſts.
' Unthinking wretches!—But I 'll try
' To rouſe you from your lethargy.
' I 'll have a Parrot taught * to ſcream—
"" *GRIMALKIN*; *Rats :—take heed of him.*
"" *GRIMALKIN!*""—Ay; the very ſame.
' What ſtart ye even at his name?
' Ye tremble, too:—I thought ye wou'd;
' For never Cat ſhed ſo much blood.
' Which of you all aſſembled here
' Mourns not the loſs of ſome one dear?
' But no one ſo great cauſe as I
' To mourn his mangled family.

* *I 'll have a Starling taught to ſpeak*
Nothing but—" *MORTIMER.*" SHAKSP.

' Not

'Not more of PRIAM's kindred died
'By that far-famed Trojanicide,
'ACHILLES, than of mine are ſlain
'Since our fell King began his reign.
'Such war unſeemly, too, he wages;
'Againſt both ſexes, and all ages.
'My Grandam, and my Grandſire eke,
'The Tyrant took away laſt week.
'Uncles, and Aunts I 've loſt, and Couſins
'-Germain, and Iriſh ones, by dozens.
'Saturday night, or Sunday morn
'My eldeſt Son was from me torn:—
'Next day at noon his ſecond Brother:—
'At twelve o'clock at night another.
'This very eve I had a Siſter;
'Juſt as the moon uproſe I miſt her.
'And much I fear that fell GRIMALKIN
'Is feaſting on her whilſt I 'm talking.
'My Wife is every day in danger:
'But that 's no matter,—ſhe 's a Ranger;
'Eternal Goſſiper, and Gadder:—
'I almoſt wiſh GRIMALKIN had her.
'His lips, I 'm told, laſcivious water
'No leſs to be about my Daughter.
'The loſs of her, too, I could bear;
'My Wife and Daughter I could ſpare;
'If the fell monſter would not touch
'A Miſtreſs whom I doat on much.

'Rather

'Rather than in his pow'r behold her,
'I 'll *hang his Cat-ſkin o'er my ſhoulder.* *
'What ſupercilious looks ye caſt!—
'As if my words were mere bombaſt.
'No; my heart 's big,—though I am little:
'Oh! that I had a Spaniſh Whittle!
'And you ſhould ſee how I wou'd ſpoil
'This Cat, as MANLIUS did the Gaul.
'Though for my Miſtreſs' ſake, I ſaid,
'I wiſh'd I had a Spaniſh Blade;
'Think not, my Fellow Cits, for her
'Alone I make this mighty ſtir.
'No: though my love for her is great;—
'Yet, how much more I love the ſtate.
'I for her ſake would live; but I
'Would, if the State required it, die.
'Though,—to be plain,—to die I 'm loath,
'For either; but would live for both.
'And ſo I will. And ſo ſhall you
'All live: and unmoleſted too.

* *And hang a calf's-ſkin o'er thoſe recreant limbs.* SHAKSP.

As MANLIUS *did the Gaul.*] Malice or Rivalry may call this a *mere ſhow of Learning*:—but, take my word for it, *honeſt* IAGO, our Rat is tolerably read. You will find, if you ſift him well, he is acquainted with the minuteſt circumſtances of Hiſtory. In that memorable Duel, (which cannot but remind one of the Fight betwixt DAVID and GOLIAH,) the Combatants' Weapons are particularly deſcribed. The gigantic Gaul had two Swords—"*duos Enſes*;" (probably a Sword, and Dagger:) the noble Roman had but one; which, however, was a *Spaniſh* one:—"*Gladio Hiſpanico cinctus contra Gallum conſtitit.*"

'For

'For though I cannot cope with GRIM
'Overtly, I've a ſtratagem
'To rid us of all fears of him.
'For which I truſt "" moſt potent, grave
And reverend RATS,"' your thanks to have.

"*Sir, you will merit more than thanks*
"*If you can ſtop* GRIMALKIN'S *pranks.*
"*The City's Love—Wealth—Honours too—*"
'Enough, enough:—too much, Meſſieurs,'
"*You may command. All we can do,—*"
'Ye are too good. That which aſſures—'
"*We ſtill ſhall be in debt to you.*"
'Your Love, confirms me ever yours.'

"*Tell us the way on which you've hit:*
"*Let us admire your wondrous wit..—*"

'Little of that. The way 's ſo plain,
'I wonder I could rack my brain
'So many ſleepleſs nights in vain.
'Not that I grudge my labour paſt,
'Since I have compaſs'd it at laſt.
'I'll tell you how it may be done,
'And frame a motion thereupon.

'Liſt, then, all parties, all connexions,
'RATS of all ages and complexions:
'Whiſker'd, or not: black, white, and grey,
'Liſten to what I have to ſay.

A murmur ran through all the croud.
Some noiſy Coxcombs who ſtood near him
Impertinently bawl'd aloud—
"*The Motion, Motion: hear him, hear him.*"

'GRIMALKIN's great advantage lies
'In ſpringing on us by ſurprize:
'When we are thoughtleſs, careleſs, ſporting;
'Or wrangling, jangling; fighting; courting.
'Whether a-bed, or up we are;
'Feaſting, or faſting; or at pray'r:
'He comes upon us unaware.
'So that, my Fellows,—to prevent
'Henceforward ſuch like accident,
'All that is wanting is *to hear*
'GRIMALKIN ere he gets too near.
'Now, as no time is to be loſt,
'I move—THAT AT THE CITY'S COST
'BE MADE A SILVER BELL; AND PUT
'FORTHWITH GRIMALKIN'S NECK ABOUT.
'By this mean he can ne'er ſtir out
'But we muſt hear him: and 'twill be
'Signal for us away to flee.'

Thus,

Thus, zealous in the common cauſe,
The *City Politician* ſpake:
And the RATS thunder'd ſuch applauſe
As made the very waſh-tubs ſhake.

Soon as the Chairman could compoſe
Their joy tumultuous, up roſe
A RAT whoſe venerable front
Had but few ſtraggling hairs upon 't;
And white ones: for, like NESTOR, he
Had lived through generations three:
But—without his loquacity.
Our RAT was wiſer; for he knew
Long ſpeeches are ill liſten'd to.
Therefore in giving his advice
He always ſtrove to be conciſe.
Whene'er he roſe, great Rats, and ſmall
Sat down, and were attentive all.

" This goodly project of a BELL
" Is plauſible: it likes you well.
" But—I am loath your joy to check;—
" When the BELL 's made, where will be found
" The Hero that dares tie it round
" The terrible GRIMALKIN's neck?"

Would

Would not this Fable, think you, ſuit
A certain modern Machiavel,
Who waking dreams—
And ſleeping ſchemes
Things that it is impoſſible
For ſuch a Mouſe to execute?

FABLE XVI.

HERMES, *and the* SHADES.

AS HERMES from this World's abode
Drove on a flock of SHADES to Hell,*
A party of them on the road
Thus into converſation fell.

'Poor ALTAMONT!—(A FEMALE ſpeaks.)—
'A truer Lover none e'er had.
'Methinks, I hear ev'n yet his ſkrieks.
'My loſs, alaſs! will drive him mad.'

"Much worſe *my* loſs is felt:—(replies
A MASTER OF A FAMILY.)—
"My Widow 's weeping out her eyes;
"My Children fain would follow me."

"" Some individuals o'er your ſod
"" May drop a tear:—(A GENERAL ſaid:)—
"" But o'er the Public's Demi-God
"" The Nation tears profuſe will ſhed."'

* The HELL, HADES, or LOWER WORLD of the Ancients compriſed the whole of the Regions which were the receptacle of departed Perſons; of the good as well as of the bad. And it was the province of HERMES to conduct them there.

"" Your

"" Your Nation ſingly—(ſays a BARD)—
"" Might grieve for you; but when *I* died,
"" Then univerſal groans were heard:
"" The World with grief grew ſtupified.""

HERMES no longer could forbear
From laughing. 'By my wand, ſays he,
'The moſt conceited Souls ye are
'That ever left mortality.

'To hear you talk, one would ſuppoſe
'You were of ſo much conſequence,
'That with the World above it goes
'Strangely, ſince you were driven thence.

'Know;—Firſt, fair DAME,—the Lover whom
'You credulouſly thought ſo true,
'Has got a Miſtreſs in your room:
'And doats on her, as erſt on you.

'You,—who a HUSBAND, and a FATHER
'Of ſuch fond Children boaſt yourſelf,
'Know, they are by the ears together:
'And fond of nothing but your pelf.

'Your Widow would, perhaps, lament
'Your loſs; be inconſolable;—
'But that her Milliner has ſent
'Home Mourning ſhe becomes ſo well.

'As

'As for your character,—your worth,
'GENERAL DEMI-GOD;—they ſay,
'There 's not your fellow upon earth
'For prudence;—for you ran away.

'Though ſpoken of invidiouſly
'By ſome; as if you miſbehaved:
'No *captured* General can deny—
'Your army and yourſelf you ſaved.

'You, the great GENIUS of your age,—
'The MÆVIUS, BAVIUS,—or who not?
'The Public's thoughts you ſo engage,—
'Your Works already are forgot.

'Had you all been of merit tried;
'And every praiſe entitled to;—
'The World is too much occupied,
'To throw away a thought on you.'

In ſooth, it matters not a whit,
When a few Men or Piſmires die;
JOVE *has ſo wiſely order'd it,*
Nature fills up the vacancy.

FABLE

FABLE XVII.

The CIRCUMSPECT TRAVELLER.

A Man who had a River ſtrange to paſs,
Fathom'd, to find where fordable it was.
And, conſtantly, in doing ſo, he found
Where it ran noiſeleſs it was moſt profound.

'Tis ſo in life. We ſafely may infer
That he is ſhalloweſt who makes moſt ſtir.
Brave Men are cool. Wiſe Men avoid debate.—
But Cowards bluſter; and Half-Idiots prate.

FABLE XVIII.

The SENTIMENTAL DOVE *and the* SPARROW.

A Briſk, young SPARROW fell in love
With an affected TURTLE-DOVE:
And meeting with her one May-day,
Alone, upon a myrtle ſpray,
The wanton rogue began to bill,
And force her to his wicked will.
But, ſhe, reſerved as e'er was prude,
Chid him for offering to be rude.
'Such forward doings ne'er will move her:
'She 's for a *ſentimental* Lover.
'None other ſhall her heart enthrall:
'Tis *Sentiment* is All in All.'

SPARROW replies,—"I've often heard
"Of this ſame fine, high-ſounding word;
"But never yet knew what it meant:
"Explain;—what is this *Sentiment?*"

'It is,—it is,—nor more nor leſs—;
'What I want language to expreſs:
'But, happy, happy he poſſeſſing
'So great, ſo rich, ſo ſweet a bleſſing!

" And, pray, who knows but I poſſeſs
" This well-defined—*nor more nor leſs*;—
" This ſweet, rich, luſcious quality?
" It may be worth your while to try."

' *You* bleſs'd with it!'

" Nay; never flout,
" Untill you find I am without.
" If not with *Sentiment* endued,
" I've qualities, perhaps, as good.
" Imprimis, Dear; were you my wife,
" I would be conſtant all my life.
" You, and you only would careſs
" From night till morning;—more or leſs;—
" As you might be in humour for 't:
" For SPARROW though, and fond of ſport,
" I am withal a Bird diſcreet;
" And can forbear till you think meet.
" Happy if with officious beak
" I may your ruffled feathers ſleek;
" Or other office what you pleaſe,—
" Ev'n to the catching of your fleas.
" For, greater pleaſure can we prove
" Than tending upon thoſe we love?
" And you and I, ſweet Bird, will be
" Proverbial for felicity.
" What ſays my Fair?—Are you content?
" Is this what you call *Sentiment?*"

The

The DOVE affectedly replies,
(With drawn-in bill, and half-ſhut eyes;)
'This looks, indeed, like *Sentiment*;
'But not ſo to its full extent.
'No; that is ſtill a ſomething more:—
'Platonic Love.—Which I adore.
''Tis Love—from ſenſual joys refined:
'A Love—peculiar to the mind.'

"'Tis very well; (the SPARROW cries;)
"Half words are whole ones to the wiſe.
"Your illuſtration 's clear and ſtriking:—
"*Cock Sparrows are not to your liking.*
"So, fare you well: I'll try to find
"Elſewhere ſome feather'd one more kind."

With this; a careleſs bow he made;
And lightly flapp'd his wings, and fled.

Ere out of hearing he had ſoar'd,
She call'd him back—

'One little word,
'Sweet Sir.—What was 't, I would have ſaid?
'Plague o' this ſwimming in my head!
'So dim my eyes, I ſcarce can ſee:—
'Dear SPARROW, do take hold of me.
'Whilſt I've yet ſtrength I'll try to clamber,
'With your aſſiſtance, to my chamber.

'And

'And when I'm safe in bed you may,—
'If you think proper,—go away.'

—:

Some Dames there are so very whimsical,
With superciliousness they treat *
Impassion'd Lovers, prostrate when they fall,
And sue for favours at their feet.

With such—affect indifference. Pretend
A willingness to go; and they
Become so facile, they will condescend
Ev'n to sollicit you to stay.

* Ardeat ipsa licet, tormentis gaudet Amantis.
JUVENAL.

FABLE

FABLE XIX.

The HOUSE-DOG, *and the* WOLF.

WHO that the ſweets of *LIBERTY* does know,
On any terms that bleſſing would forego?

A lean, half-famiſh'd WOLF, that chanc'd to ſtray
Near a Court-yard towards the break of day,
Saw through the grate a MASTIFF ſleek and fat.
They wagg'd their tails, and enter'd into chat.
" Whoſe Houſe is this?"
' SQUIRE RUSTIC's, Sir. You ſeem
' A ſtranger here;—not to have heard of him!'
" I never heard him mention'd in my life."
' Nor MADAM RUSTIC:—his fine-lady Wife?
' Have you ne'er heard it ſaid, ſhe has undone
' The SQUIRE by play:—and quarrell'd with his Son?
' 'Tis wonderful Men will diſturb their lives,
' When happy Widowers, with Second Wives!'
" Theſe things are ſecrets which ne'er reach'd my ears:
" Nor care I about other folks affairs."
' What!—Not for other peoples' ſecrets care!
' In ſooth, Sir, you are very ſingular.

' Do

'Do you not go to any Skittle-ground,
'Gambling, or Public-houſe? We've many round
'The country; whereto idle Dogs reſort
'And kill their time with various kinds of ſport,
'And miſchief; till at laſt they're tuck'd up for't.'

"Not ſuch my life: inhabiting a wood,
"I ſeldom quit it, but in ſearch of food."

'What! can you paſs your evenings away
'Without or tippling, goſſiping, or play?
'I know no Dogs that can:—and in my eyes,
'A Dog you ſeem, though of a larger ſize,
'And fiercer look. Unkempt, indeed, as yet
'Your hair; and rough your coat: but when you get
'Into good keeping, you will look as well,
'As fat, as ſleek as I.'

"Ay?—Prithee, tell
"How I can grow as portly as you are:
"You look as if you fed on dainty fare."

'Excellent truly. And ſo, Friend, may you,
'Feed on like fare,—if you'll like ſervice do.'

"What kind of ſervice, pray, Sir, may it be?
"I'm ſtrong enough; no work will frighten me."

'What you've to do is trifling, next to play;—
''Tis only to fright houſe-breakers away
'By night, and let in viſitors by day.'

"If

" If that be all the buſineſs, I embrace
" It gladly. Can you help me to a place?"

' Perchance. Our Neighbour's Porter, as they ſay,
' Died of an apoplexy t'other day.
' If no one yet is to his place preferr'd,
' I'll aſk our Butler to put in a word.'

" O! what a life luxurious ſhall I lead!
" And not, as heretofore, in daily need:
" Summer and winter forced abroad to roam
" For food, full many a weary mile from home:
" Precarious fare. But now, O, grateful change!
" For pleaſure only I abroad ſhall range:
" And when at home, be regularly fed:
" Lay ſoft: and have a covering o'er my head.
" Some care I'll take of this ſweet perſon, too:
" And wear a gloſſy coat, as well as you."

Thus joy'd in thought, he chanced to caſt his eye
On the DOG's neck; and aſks impatiently,—
" But hey-day!—What has made this *circle*, pray,
" About your neck?—The hair is worn away.
" Have you with other Maſtiff lately fought?
" Or have you in a gin or ſnare been caught?—
" For 'tis too regularly mark'd, to be
" A fighting ſcar.—Explain it, pray, to me."

' Pooh!—'Tis a trifling circumſtance; a thing
' Of no import: 'tis not worth mentioning.'

" I crave

" I crave your pardon; but, your being ſhy
" Of telling, ſtirs my curioſity."

' Why, then, I'll tell you, Friend, (ſince I muſt ſpeak)
' I ſometimes wear a Collar round my neck.'

" A *Collar!* What is that?—And what to do?"

' A leather thong, annex'd a chain unto;
' Which, with a ſtaple driven in the wall,
' Confines me, that' ———

" You ſcarce can wag at all:
" I underſtand you; I have ſeen a chain;
" And Dogs, too, tugging to get looſe, in vain.
" So, Sir, your Servant: I'll trot home again."

' Why in ſuch haſte?'

" The place will not agree
" With my proud ſpirit. No: I muſt be free.
" Though almoſt ſtarved, myſelf I ne'er could bring
" To wear a Collar: 'tis a ſervile thing:
" The chain yet worſe: and then, to be confined!—
" The very thought of it appals the mind."

' Imagined ills! The Collar 's no diſgrace.
' And, though confin'd,—'tis in a cleanly place.
' Nor am I chain'd but with my own good will.'

" Oh! worſe, and worſe:—what let 'em uſe you ill!
" Would not a Beaſt of ſpirit ſooner die?
" But you, tame wretch, ſeem pleaſed with ſlavery.

" You

" You own a Maſter: crouch at his command:
" And fawn, I dare to ſay, and lick his hand
" Ev'n whilſt he 's chaining you."

' And what of that?
' See you how well I'm recompenſed? How fat
' I am? I thrive at leaſt beneath his care.
' I'm daily fed with ſuch delicious fare
' As, Mr. Barebones, ſaucy as you be,
' You would be very glad to ſhare with me.
' Stay, but, and ſee the breakfaſt they will bring.
' A *Slave*, indeed!—I feaſt me like a *King*.'

" My ſervice to your King-ſhip. May you be
" Feaſted alone: the place will not ſuit me.
" No:—I'm a WOLF. I'd rather *lean* remain,
" And *free*;—than a *fat* DOG, and wear a *Chain*."

FABLE XX.

The ZEBRA *and the* HORSE.

A ZEBRA inſolent, and proud,
Kept in the King's Menagery,
Vaunting, as oft he did, aloud,—
'None had ſo fine a coat as he.'

"True!—(Says the HACKNEY of a Squire,
Who chanced along that road to paſs:)
"Your gaudery we muſt admire:—
"But, ſtill, we know you for an *ASS*."

FABLE

FABLE XXI.

The TWO PEARS.

TWO PEARS, upon adjacent trees, (who talk'd
Much as School-Miſſes did who near them walk'd,)
Diſcourſing earneſtly, ONE ſaid—'That ſhe,
'Though younger, was the riper; and would be
'Gather'd the firſt.'

"I'll not for forwardneſs
"Diſpute; (the OTHER ſaid:) I am the leſs:
"But mark me well, my Friend:—if you're not gotten
"Off in good time, you'll *ſpoil.—Soon ripe, ſoon rotten.*"

FABLE

FABLE XXII.

The DRONES, *and the* BEE.

A Set of ſilly, City DRONES,
Indolent, good-for-nothing ones,
Idly reſolved on an excurſion
To WINDSOR; for a week's diverſion.
And, that they might be ſure to paſs
Their time well, each would take a Laſs.
If fine the weather, they would ramble
About the Parks: elſe, drink, and gamble.
But, not content with being bad
Themſelves, they 'd fain draw in a Lad—
(Oaf that I am!)—I mean a BEE,
To make one of the company.
Th' induſtrious BEE excuſes made:
" His time was taken up in Trade.
" Nor had he reliſh, more than leiſure,
" For parties of *ſuch* ſort of pleaſure.
" *Gambling* he did not underſtand:
" He ne'er took dice, nor cards in hand.
" No joy to him the being *drunk*.
" Nor had he any favourite *Punk*.

" To

" To ſay the truth,—not yet was he
" Initiated in venery.
" His ſtrength he would not idly waſte:
" But would, whilſt Bachelor, be chaſte;
" That, if he e'er ſhould married be,
" He might have healthful progeny."

The DRONES were thunderſtruck to hear
So young a Cato—ſo ſevere.
For every ſyllable he ſpoke
Seem'd againſt them a levell'd ſtroke
Of Satire. Doubtleſs, for their ſakes,
He cried down Gameſters—Drunkards—Rakes.
Which ſo exaſperated them,
That with revenge they threaten'd him.
Boldly avow'd—' they would deviſe
' Miſchief: and not ev'n ſtick at lies.
' For if to puniſhment they cou'd
' Bring him by any means, they wou'd.
' They'd ſwear he had done this,—done that;—
' Honey purloin'd;—and—Jove knows what.—
' Which when his Miſtreſs heard of, he
' Excluded from the Hive would be.'

To which the BEE made this reply:
" Your utmoſt malice I defy.
" My gracious Miſtreſs is not one
" Eaſy to be impoſed upon.

" She

" She will ſift well the truth, and weigh
" My merits againſt all you ſay.
" And, I've no doubt, my character
" Will countervail what you aver.
" But,—ev'n if falſhood ſhould prevail
" For once:—Should ſhe believe the tale;—
" Should ſhe diſgrace me:—ay;—or drive
" With ignominy from the Hive:—
" That, though a puniſhment ſevere,—
" Or death itſelf undaunted I could bear,
" My *conſcience* being from offences *clear*."

FABLE

FABLE XXIII.

The WOLF *and the* LAMB.

A WOLF, and LAMB at the ſame inſtant came
To ſlake their thirſt at a pellucid ſtream.
Although the WOLF ſtood higher, tow'rds the ſource,
The water flowing undiſturb'd, of courſe,
To him,—reſolved to quarrel,—he began
To tax the LAMB: complain'd the water ran
Muddy from him: and wonder'd—'He ſhould dare
'Diſturb it, when he ſaw his Wolf-ſhip there.'

"With great ſubmiſſion, Sir,—how can it be?—
"Does not the water run from you to me?"

'Another thing; pert Sir.—I fain would know
'Why you abuſed me?'

"When?"

'Six months ago.'

"Whoever told you ſo, a falſehood told:
"For, Sir, I am not yet a quarter old."

'If 't was not you, it was your Father, then.'

The LAMB, with filial piety, would fain
Have clear'd his Father's character:—in vain:—

For

For at one ſpring the WOLF, blood-thirſty Brute,
Seized on the LAMB; and ended the diſpute.

Thus Kings, and Nobles, in deſpotic Land,
Graſp the poor Peaſantry with ruthleſs hand.

But,—happy Countrymen! How bleſs'd our ſtate:
Unawed, unſhackled by the Proud, or Great.
Here to the Commonalty Law affords
Protection againſt too imperious Lords.
Not ev'n the King in power is ſo ſtrong—
To dare to do his meaneſt Subject wrong.
I do not mean, our preſent Monarch *would*.—
I know he would not do ſo, if he could.
Still, to be free, regard with jealous eye
The leaſt encroachments of Authority.
But, above all, a STANDING ARMY dread.
If once that Monſter rears too high its head;—
If e'er our military force ſhould be
Augmented much, we riſk our Liberty.
The danger is not now; nor is it near;
I truſt: but, diſtant ages, (ſhould they hear
My ſmall, weak voice,) the precept will revere
No leſs; nor hold their birthright—Liberty—leſs dear.

FABLE

FABLE XXIV.

TWO DOGS *fighting for a Bone.*

TWO DOGS, the fierceſt of their kind,
Happen'd a Bacon Bone to find:
ONE quickly ſeized upon the Bone;
Which 't OTHER claim'd;—'Leave that alone:
'Tis mine: I ſaw it before you.'
"'T were hard to prove if that be true.
"But, whiche'er ſaw it firſt, or laſt,
"I have it: and I 'll hold it faſt."
'Sirrah! I ſay, take off your paw.
'Or halve it: or I 'll go to Law.
'Tis written—"" *Rebus de inventis*"'——'
"Nonſenſe!—I ſay,—"" *Jus poſſidentis*"'——
"But 't were loſt time to hold diſpute
"With ſuch a known-litigious Brute;
"Therefore, to cut the matter ſhort,
"Give up your claim, or fight me for 't."
'Ay; that I will, with all my heart,
'Notorious Bruiſer though thou art,
'Thou canſt not frighten me. I 'll fight
'Rather than give up what 's my right.'

Or halve it:] Δεινος απαιτησαι το μερος,—κοινον ειναι φησας τον Ερμην. THEOPHR.

Thus ſaid; the Champions ſtraight engag'd;
And long, and furious combat waged;
So much, the ground whereon they ſtood
Could not drink faſt enough their blood.
And had not channels ten, or fewer,
Carried it to the common ſewer,
Our Combatants had both been found
In no-*pacific* ocean drown'd.

(Should any one devoid of taſte,
Call this diſcription 'mere bombaſt;'—
Abuſe the pun: and wonder how
I dare ſuch latitude allow
Myſelf:—CALLIOPE maintains—
((Thank you, dear Goddeſs, for the pains
Of vindicating what *I* 've done—
Or rather *you*;—but that 's all one:
((('Tis fit the world at large ſhould know it,
I am her tragi-comic Poet.
WALLBECKOMASTIX if there be
Any will this diſpute with me,
Let him draw forth his—*grey gooſe Quill*;
Whilſt I 've a drop of—*ink*, I will
Fight with him: ay; and make him caper,
Until he 's tired of it, on —— *paper*.
With other fighting what have *I*
To do? My field—is *Poetry*;
My ſword—my *Pen*. Not willingly
Draw it I would in enmity:

But,

But, if compell'd to draw at all,
Take heed; for it is dipp'd in gall:
And never Indian's poiſon'd dart
With deadlier virus touch'd the heart.)))
But, now; may 't pleaſe your Goddeſs-ſhip,
Proceed: nor let th' occaſion ſlip
Of ſetting forth the dignity
Of this our curriſh Epopee.
((((Silence, ye noiſy Sons of Earth!
Heaven-born CALLIOPE holds forth.))))
"" *Let no one paſs harſh judgement on*
"" *This Poem worthy Helicon.*
"" *Far from burleſque, 'tis true ſublime.*
"" *Purpoſely broken, to give time*
"" *For two ſuch valiant Curs to fight.*
"" *This 'tis to* think, *as well as write.*
"" *Some Authors would have ſcribbled on*
"" *The Story; and have got all done,*
"" *Ere my lov'd Bard had finiſh'd this*
"" *Quadripartite parentheſis.*"")

Long fought the DOGS; and fought ſo well
It was impoſſible to tell
Which had the better. Void of ſtrength
They fell together at full length.

Juſt then, as they exhauſted lay,
Motionleſs, breathleſs,—cunning TRAY,
(Who at a diſtance watch'd the fray,)
Stepp'd in,—*and took the Bone away.*

ENGLAND

ENGLAND and FRANCE for *Commerce* go to War.
Ye jealous Nations, will ye ne'er be wiſe?
By your Diſſentions NEUTRALS vantaged are.
You waſte your ſtrength, *They* carry off the Prize.

The MOTHER COUNTRY's right of controul over her own COLONIES, was ENGLAND's juſtification in the late War with NORTH AMERICA. FRANCE took part with the Americans; and the reaſon LEWIS THE SIXTEENTH gave, to juſtify his breach with Us, was the moſt *curious* and *ridiculous* one that a weak and inſolent Monarch ever gave,—namely, *his Love of Liberty*.—*He*, LEWIS THE SIXTEENTH,—holding his *own* Subjects in the moſt *abject Slavery*,—pretended all of a ſudden an enthuſiaſtic fondneſs for *general Freedom*. I ſhould be apt here to exclaim in the oft-cited words of HORACE,—"*Riſum teneatis, Amici?*"—but that I am ſure no honeſt Engliſhman's indigation has yet ſubſided. If, centuries hence, our poſterity, reading the *Manifeſto* of LEWIS THE SIXTEENTH, ſhould be betrayed into a ſmile, it will be—the ſmile of *ineffable contempt*.

But whatever the Manifeſtos of either Court might ſet forth,—whatever might be the *alleged* reaſons for the War, every child in politics knows, that the *real* motive to it was the hope of poſſeſſing the *Commerce* with AMERICA ſolely and excluſively. That was, in reality, the *Bone of Contention*. And whilſt We, (ENGLAND and FRANCE,) were ruining ourſelves by the conteſt,—RUSSIA, DENMARK, SWEDEN, and HOLLAND, (till She was herſelf engaged,) and all the NEUTRAL POWERS of Europe were profiting by our folly.

I wrote this FABLE in the year 1782, when we were actually at War. Since that time *Peace* has happily been re-eſtabliſhed: and the Miniſter is endeavouring to ſtrengthen its bands by a *commercial* Intercourſe with FRANCE. I have not ſo irreconcilable a hatred to the French, as to be ſorry to have any communication with them;—but,—*timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*.—I ſuſpect the French Cabinet of entering into this Treaty with the political view—*of throwing us off our guard*.

National Reflections caſt upon ſimple Individuals are often cruel, and always illiberal; but in reference to States, they are generally juſt: for, almoſt every Nation has its characteriſtic qualities. Were I to ſay thoſe of FRANCE are *Cunning*, *Duplicity*, and *Perfidiouſneſs*;—the Hiſtory of many Ages would warrant the aſſertion.—

But

But to come immediately to our own days;—Does not the *reigning Monarch*, and the *reigning Miniſter* of FRANCE poſſeſs thoſe very qualities in an eminent degree? I appeal to the memory of every Man living in Europe, and to the fact, of FRANCE's interference in the late War. MONSIEUR DE VERGENNES, the preſent Miniſter, did, in the name of LOUIS SEIZE, the preſent French King, give us the ſtrongeſt *profeſſions* of Friendſhip, at the breaking out of,—and ſome time after the War had been carried on againſt AMERICA. Whereas all the while He was abetting the Americans; and from the firſt was fully reſolved to break with us. He waited only till he had lulled our then Miniſter into a fooliſh, and almoſt fatal ſecurity; and then he opened upon us ſuch a tremendous naval battery, as aſtoniſhed, and *almoſt frightened* ſome of our oldeſt Commanders. "*Cui bono*,—to what purpoſe, (ſays the Reader,) this long political Note?"

Patience, good Sir; You ſhould know, I am neither a Spouter in Parliament, nor a Holder-forth in Coffee-Houſes, nor yet a Pamphleteer, nor a Paragraph Writer; do then afford me the only opportunity I have of lecturing the Old Miniſtry, and adviſing the New. If, like many of my Brothers of the Quill, I write, and write, and nobody reads, that is not my fault. I *would* ſave the Nation.—Not by oppoſing the Commercial Syſtem: No; I hope, if carried into effect, it will anſwer the good intentions of MR. PITT. But I hope, and truſt it will not anſwer the political purpoſe of the COURT OF VERSAILLES,—to make us relax our Vigilance. Whilſt, indeed, THE KING has the *ableſt Seaman* in the World, the *brave* and *indefatigable* LORD HOWE, to co-operate with MR. PITT, the Nation has not much to fear. His profeſſional, as well as perſonal ſpirit is our guarantee, that he will not hold the office of FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY upon any other terms, than, *keeping up a great Naval Force.*

It is a ſound maxim in Politics, to make Peace with the *ſword drawn*; that is, not to ſuſpend hoſtilities during the negotiation. It is no leſs politic to keep arms within one's reach, when Peace *is* made.

I would not walk in any Street in Italy with a ſworn Foe, without having my hand upon my ſword. And though he ſhould throw away his oſtenſible weapon, and profeſſing a friendſhip for me, approach to *traffic*, yet would I keep an eye upon him, and, ſuſpicious of a *lurking dagger*, be prepared for the worſt. Nations are but Individuals in aggregate. Whatever it may be wiſe in theſe to obſerve, it will be fooliſh in thoſe to neglect.

FABLE

FABLE XXV.

The TWO WALLETS.

JOVE, when he framed us, had in mind
Our Bliſs; and gave us WALLETS two,
Our *Faults* in one we ſling behind:
Our *Virtues* we keep full in view.

THE inconvenience which attends
Our mode of wearing them is this,
We ſee the failings of our friends,—
But nothing in ourſelves amiſs.

FABLE XXVI.

The LEOPARD, *and the* FOX.

A LEOPARD boaſting of 'his beauteous Skin;'—
A Fox replied,—"My merit lies *within*."

FABLE XXVII.

The TORTOISE, *and the* EAGLE.

A TORTOISE, not content that he could ſwim
In water well; and on the land could crawl;
Seeing an EAGLE *fly*, entreated him
To take him up;—He did; and—let him fall.

WHEN Folk ambitious quit their proper ſphere,
No wonder if their folly coſts them dear.

FABLE

FABLE XXVIII.

The DAW *in Peacocks Feathers.*

IS it not laughable to ſee
YOUNG PHILPOT, after ſhutting ſhop,
Give himſelf airs in company;—
And ſtrut about; and play the Fop?

GOSSIPINA ſhows off at BATH.
Is there a Ducheſs in the Rooms
More coſtly cloaths;—more diamonds hath;—
A longer train;—or higher plumes?

KILL'D by inclemency of weather,
A Peacock ſtretch'd upon the ground,
By a JACK-DAW was found,
And ſtripp'd of every feather.
Straight he bedecks him with the gaudy plumes;
And a majeſtic, lofty port aſſumes.

Upon Hydaſpes' bank he ſtood,
Admiring much his perſon in the flood,
Which ſerved him for a looking-glaſs.
Wide he expands his variegated tail,
And mimics, (as he thinks,) ſo well
The grace of Juno's Bird, he has no doubt
But, thus deck'd out,
He for her favourite any where would paſs.

Unluckily

Unluckily for poor JACK-DAW,
A flock of PEACOCKS came to drink
At the ſame River's brink,
And their ſtrange counterfeited-fellow ſaw.

Inſtead of ſkulking to ſome tree,
Or hole, to hide his gaudery;
Proud of what aukwardly he wore,
The graceful Birds he ſtruts before:
Nay, even preſumes with them to mix.
Round him they throng; and fix
Their eyes indignantly on him:
And clamour loud; and ſcream.

One, more ſarcaſtic than the reſt,
Says, (meaning to be overheard,)
'Do any of you know this Bird?
'How vulgarly the Thing is dreſt!'

Another Peacock, fond of fun,
Propoſed,—"He ſhould be made to run
"The gantlet." "Ay.—Agreed upon."

The DAW the propoſition heard:
More pale he grew at every word.
But when the preparations dire,—
The ranks a-forming beaks a-whetting,
Stern viſages, and eyes on fire,
He ſaw,—reſolved upon retreating.

He

He ſtrove to get away; in vain:
Encumber'd with his finery,
The hapleſs caitiff could not fly:
Was taken; and brought back again.

The diſcipline ſevere began:
Poor JACK the gantlet ran,
With his beſt haſte;—
Yet not ſo faſt;—
But ere 't was done,
He of his borrow'd feathers, every one,
Was ſtripp'd; and no ſmall portion of his own.

Abaſh'd, confounded, home he goes;
Curſing the Peacocks: and relates
The uſage to his old Aſſociates.
And to enſure compaſſion, ſhows
His body bruiſed, his pinions bare.
Inſtead of pitying, they one and all
Rally the Blockhead; and declare
'That moſt ſincerely glad they are—
'*His pride, his odious pride, has had a fall.*'

FABLE XXIX.

The LION *feigning Sickneſs.*

LEO grown lazy, old, or lame,
His Houſehold were ill off for game;
Or eatables of any ſort.
Allowances ran very ſhort.
Save the hind quarters of a Horſe;
An Aſs's briſket, tough and coarſe;
Part of a Stag; and half a Boar;
Little contain'd the larder more.
For which, his Caterer and Cook,
JACKAL, occaſion proper took,
Humbly to tell his Majeſty,
He ſtood in need of a ſupply.
'Your Houſehold, Sire, and all your Train
'Of their lank carcaſes complain.
'May I preſume to name the *Queen?*—
'I grieve to ſee ſhe grows ſo lean.
'And, which of all her *Maids-of-Honour*
'Has half an ounce of fleſh upon her?
'Your *Chaplains*—(if ſuch idle Drones
'Thrive not, how ſhould induſtrious ones
'Whoſe labour wears them to the bones?)—
'Your *Chaplains* moſt devoutly pray
'For better viands every day.

'The

'The *Beef-eaters* beg leave to join
'In ſuch a prayer; and hope to dine
'A little oftener on Sirloin.
'But why enumerate every one?—
'They're famiſh'd all.'

"What 's to be done?—
(The LION ſays.) "I cannot hunt
"So frequently as I was wont.
"And yet I ſhould be ſorry that
"My Houſehold were not ſleek and fat."

'May 't pleaſe you, Sire; I know a trick
'Might anſwer.—*Make believe you 're ſick.*
'All ſorts of Beaſts will then reſort,
'Or out of grief, or joy, to Court.
'And when we have them ſafe within
'The coop, let 's kill 'em, fat and lean.'

The King approves the ſcheme: and ſends
His Pages round, as well to Friends,
As to inveterate Enemies:
To ſay,—"" In abject ſtate he lies:
""" By Doctors given o'er. And he
""" Wiſhes his Subjects all to ſee:
""" To be forgiven paſt injuries
""" Of every ſort, before he dies.
""" For, till forgiven by all Brute-kind,
""" He cannot die in peace of mind."""

Of

Of all the Beaſts to whom they ſent
Of none were they ſo diffident
As of the Fox: they knew that he,
Remarkable for ſubtilty,
Was not, as ſenſeleſs boobies are,
Eaſy to draw into a ſnare.
They therefore to the meſſage add,—
"" The dying Monarch would be glad
"" Of his advice; to make his Will
"" Anew; or add a Codicil.
"" Earneſtly beg him,—not to ſtay
"" To dreſs himſelf; but trot away:
"" For they (the APES) were in a fright,
"" Leſt he ſhould not live out the night."'

RENARD expreſs'd 'his grief at hearing
'The King to t'other world was ſteering:
'But hoped he would not paſs the Styx
'Before he called. He could not fix
'The time: for poſſibly it might
'Be late; or not at all that night.
'But the next morning, certainly
'He 'd wait upon His Majeſty.'

The morning came; Fox never went:
Nor next, nor next: nor ever meant:
Till buſineſs calling him abroad,
He took the Palace in his road.
Far as the veſtibule he ventured;
Look'd in; but prudently not enter'd.

LEO,

LEO, who had not ſtirr'd from home,
Was overjoy'd to ſee him come.
He bade his Apes go forth to meet him;
With ſalutations many greet him.
"" They wonder'd that they had not ſeen
"" Him ſooner:—that the King had been
"" Enquiring after him; and was
"" Afraid that illneſs was the cauſe
"" Of his long abſence. But 't would cheer
"" The good old King at length to hear
"" The voice of one he held ſo dear.—
"" For as to ſeeing him,—poor Soul!—
"" LEO was blinder than a Mole.""
Artful as was the Pages' ſpeech,
The Fox they could not over-reach.

With much grimace, and bows and ſcrapes,—
In their own coin he pays the APES.
' He did but call as he went by,
' To know how fared his Majeſty.
' Great JOVE he fervently petitions
' To ſave him, ſpite of his Phyſicians.'

"" You muſt not go. What will the King
"" Think of ſo very ſtrange a thing?
"" It looks ſo like diſloyalty,
"" I dare not tell him."" " No; nor I:
" I'm very ſure, ſhould he ſurvive,
" Such treatment he will not forgive."

The

The Fox continues obſtinate,
Not to ſet foot within the gate.

Leo, who liſtening overheard
The altercation, every word,
Exclaims—" What! Renard?—Pray draw near.
" I 've ſomething for your private ear:
" Matter moſt intricate, and nice.
" I ſtand in need of your advice
" Touching my will. The whelp, my Heir,
" Is thoughtleſs,—young:—you underſtand.
" Your parchment;—come,—take quill in hand."

' Sire, I have brought nor ſtamps, nor quill
' Along with me. Defer your Will,
' So pleaſe you, to another day.'

" Well, be it ſo. But, ſtep this way.
" There 's ſomething elſe on which I 'd ſpeak
" To you.——Ay, me!—I grow ſo weak,
" That every time I fetch my breath
" I feel I'm drawing nearer death."

' Sire, you had better talk no longer:
' Wait till you get a little ſtronger.'

" Well; we'll not talk: but do walk in.
" It is an age ſince I have ſeen
" Any one of your family.

" I'd

" I 'd fain confer, before I die,
" Some favour on you. Wealth,—or Land,—
" Or what?"

' None; ſave to kiſs your hand.
' For which I would approach your bed,
' Might I be ſo far honoured.———
' Foh!—what does this rank odour mean?
' Your Nurſes do not keep you clean;
' I fear. Or do your Butchers treat
' Your Majeſty with ſtinking meat?
' I muſt retire. I cannot bear
' Longer to breathe ſuch noxious air.'

" If that 's the caſe—(the King replies,)
" I 'll try if I have ſtrength to riſe:—
" For ſpeak with you, I muſt, ſweet Sir."

' Not for the world. You ſhall not ſtir.
' 'T would be a ſhame, ſhould it be ſaid,
' For *me* you ventured out of bed.
' No; no:—lay ſtill, and keep you warm:
' The chilly air will do you harm.
' For fear of miſchief, which would grieve
' Me very much,—I take my leave.'

" Stop; ſays the LION. Ere you go,
" Reſolve one thing. I fain would know,
" Why you ſo long have kept away?—
" And now ſeem fearful of foul-play?

" Has

" Has any one my ſcheme betray'd?
" Or are you of all Kings afraid?
" For once, good RENARD, in reply
" Be frank, be candid, as am I.
" For I confeſs—I am not ſick;
" Nor have been: it was all a trick.
" I ſpread abroad the falſe report,
" T' inveigle ſimpletons to Court.
" From every part in crouds they came:
" I aſk'd their help, my Will to frame;
" They gave it; putting in a claim
" To ſomething, each;—a Mourning Ring;—
" A Coin;—a Medal:—any thing:—
" Not for the value they would take,
" But keep it merely for my ſake.
" They little thought *how* I 'd fulfil
" The hidden purpoſe of my Will.
" Only put in your head; look round:
" Gueſs, by theſe bones that ſtrew the ground,
" What ſort of legacies they found.
" Now, tell me, RENARD, how it happ'd,
" You were not, like the reſt, entrapp'd?"

' Sire, (ſays the FOX,) my maxim is,—
' (Your pardon if I ſpeak amiſs,)
' NO MONARCH ABSOLUTE TO TRUST,
' However clement, good, and juſt.

' But

'But when—(I pardon aſk again—)
'We 've One, who during a ſhort reign
'Whole hecatombs of Beaſts has ſlain;
'Without the leaſt pretext, or cauſe;—
'Juſtice againſt,—againſt all Laws;——
'But what is Juſtice? What are Laws,
'In FRANCE, oppoſed to LEO's paws?'—

"Spare your philippic:—to the point."

'*The times*, I ſay, *are out of joint*.'*—

The LION chafed, and ſhook his mane:
"What! you 're remonſtrating again?"

'Then, thus:—no ſooner had I heard
'The royal ſummons than I fear'd
'Some ſtratagem,—ſome foul-play meant.
'And whilſt the credulous were bent
'On paying homage, alias court,
'I thought I 'd wait ſome friend's report.

'I might have waited long, indeed;
'For in the footſteps to your Den,
'How many Beaſts went *in*, I read;—
'But not one foot ſtepp'd *out* again.'

* SHAKSP.

FABLE XXX.

The FOWLER *and the* HAWK.

A FOWLER obſerving a Pigeon one day
Purſued by a HAWK, and near falling its prey;
Uplifted his gun, and his aim took ſo well,
The Pigeon eſcaped, and the HAWK wounded fell.
Obſerving, however, ſome ſymptoms of life,
The FOWLER drew out of his pocket a knife
To finiſh it quite. At the inſtant the ſtroke
Impended, the Bird thus the FOWLER beſpoke.
'Why, ſurely, you will not ſo barbarous be,
'Without provocation to murder poor me!
'What harm have I done you? Have I ever ſtole
'A Pigeon from you? No; not one by my ſoul.
'If caught in your garden, or yard I had been;—
'Or hovering over your Pigeon-houſe ſeen;
'Then might you have kill'd me. Had that been the [caſe,
'I 'd not have aſk'd quarter;—expected no grace.
'But, as matters are, I inſiſt you enlarge
'Me; or lay if you can ſome offence to my charge.'

"Give

" Give over your prating: (The FOWLER replies.)
" I 've mark'd your miſdeed,—have I not?—with theſe [eyes.
" A Pigeon you ſeized on; and would have imbrued,
" If I had not ſtopp'd you, your talons in blood.
" The miſchief you meant to another to do,
" As juſtice demands, ſhall be meted to you."

Uplifting his hand and the knife, as he ſaid;
Without further parley he cut off its head.

FABLE

FABLE XXXI.

The BEAR *on his Travels.*

SOME Poultry drinking at a brook,
As uſual, at each ſip they took
Their heads they lifted up on high;
And ſeem'd to gaze upon the ſky.
As they were doing ſo, a BEAR,
From Norway, or—no matter where,—
Obſerving them, put up his paws
In wonder: and demands 'the cauſe
'Of doing ſo?'

A COCK, endued
With ſenſe, replies—"From gratitude.
"I never yet or eat, or drank,—
"Nor will,—without returning thank
"To him, the gracious Deity,
"Who doth our daily wants ſupply."

The BEAR, without religion bred,
Scoff'd at his gratitude; and ſaid:—
'Well; in my life I never heard
'Of any cuſtom ſo abſurd!
'Thank JUPITER each time you quaff!—
'By all the Gods, you make me laugh.'

The

The Cock indignantly replies,
(Reſentment flaſhing from his eyes,)
" I know not in what Country you
" Were born; nor where you 're going to.—
" From deſerts, not unlike, broke looſe:
" Yet not ev'n that were an excuſe
" For your behaviour. Though of Reading
" Ignorant;—and void of Breeding:—
" Though from an unenlighten'd Nation;—
" Without inſtruction, education;—
" Simply from reaſon might you know,—
" Almoſt from inſtinct, what you owe
" Of reverence to Him who feeds
" Us all, and furniſhes our needs.
" But, were it no religious rite,—
" Only a cuſtom;—ſure you might,
" Whilſt with us, pay a deference
" To local modes: not give offence.
" Why take ſuch pains to prove you are
" A downright, worthleſs, ſenſeleſs *BEAR?*"

FABLE

FABLE XXXII.

The FROGS *desiring a King.*

A Commonwealth of FROGS long happy lived,
Free, in their marſhes; and grew fat, and thrived:
In this one thing particularly bleſt,
That no one Frog could lord it o'er the reſt.
Ah! happy people!—had they known to prize*
Their envied Freedom, high Immunities!
By ſome fatuity they wiſh'd to vie
With other States, in regal dignity:
And would into a Monarchy erect
Their own; in order to command reſpect.
But ſenſible, withal, no one of them
Was fit to wear the royal Diadem.
If honour'd with it, pride would ſo inflate
That Frog; and ſo much jealouſy create
In others; it might overturn the State.
Rather than riſk ſo much, they wiſh'd to have
A Foreigner, though e'er ſo great a Knave.

To JOVE they offer up a pray'r,—"" that He
"" On ſome one would confer the Dignity.""

JOVE heard their pray'r; and in a merry mood,
Sent them a harmleſs King,—*a Log of Wood.*

* *O, fortunatos nimium, ſua ſi bona norint!*

As

As from Olympus' towring height it fell
Into the marſh, the noiſe was terrible.
Quickly its Subjects panic-ſtruck retire
Amongſt the Reeds, or dive into the Mire.
The ſtouteſt hearts amongſt them were afraid;
But the old Quidnuncs were the moſt diſmay'd:
They ſhook their heads, reproaching one another:—
'Tis, as I ſaid 't would be: ay, Brother, Brother;
This curſt ambition you 'll have cauſe to rue.
O! madneſs! What had we with Kings to do?
Look to your heads. Methinks I hear the axes
Already whetting for us. Death and Taxes!—
Shall we not, think ye, have a yearly Budget?
Or *Water-Tax.* 'Tis now too late to grudge it.
I tremble, too, for what we more muſt bear,
If a mad Miniſter ſhould go to war.
Then,—the King's houſehold. How will ye ſupport
That monſter? Will ye ſtarve to feed the Court?

Water-Tax.] Alluding perhaps, by parody, to the *LAND-TAX* of Great-Britain; an unwiſe, unjuſt, unequal, and oppreſſive Tax: particularly oppreſſive now; becauſe, although the War ended four years ſince, the Tax is ſtill levied at the rack Rate.

It is not to vex our Miniſter, PITT, (for of him I have ſo high an opinion, that I believe the Salvation of this Country depends upon his continuance in office;)—nor can it be ſuppoſed to be for my own particular intereſt, I ſpeak:—an *Author* and a *Landholder*—(though ſome of us write ourſelves *Eſquires*)—are very diſtinct terms. I do but note this in order to call the attention of Mr. PITT, (or the Miniſter for the time being,) to the ſubject; and to prepare the minds of intereſted perſons to expect an alteration in the mode of levying the Land-Tax; for, ſooner or later, under certain modifications, it muſt take place.

For,

'For, if his Queen, and Tadpole progeny
'Should of the ſame enormous ſtature be,
'Few meals our aqueous diſtricts will ſupply:
'Soon, very ſoon they 'll drink our marſhes dry.'

Thus ſorry were they JOVE had heard their pray'r;
And would the whole had been diſperſed in air.

The King, however, lay ſo long aſleep,
Or dead, the FROGS reſolved to take a peep.
Nearer, and nearer, by degrees they drew;
And of his *ſacred perſon* got full view.
On every ſide of him whole hours they ſwim;
And gaze; but know not what to make of him.
After much reconnoitering, a Frog
Renown'd for valiance leap'd upon King Log.
Encouraged by his boldneſs others try,
By gentle jogs, to rouſe his Majeſty:
They pinch, and puſh; and various ways eſſay;
In vain: inert, and motionleſs he lay.
Which made them doubt, if really it were
A King; and whether JOVE had play'd them fair.
A learn'd Ontologiſt who came to ſee,
Amongſt the reſt, this ſign of Royalty,
Aſſerted roundly,—"It was not endued
"With life: no organs had: nor fleſh; nor blood.
"A mere unanimated piece of Wood.
"And,—they might take his word,—a lifeleſs thing
"Would never make an active, buſtling King."

Since

Since of their Log they could not entertain
Great hopes, they pray'd to JUPITER again.
"" Truſting, this time he would not with them ſport;
"" But ſend a Monarch of *ſome other ſort*."

JOVE heard their ſecond mad requeſt; and ſent
Forthwith a *Stork:* by way of puniſhment.

A *different* Monarch, truly, proved the *Stork:*
With his long beak he quickly fell to work.
The FROGS his fury and his hunger feel:
For hundreds ſcarcely furniſh out a meal.
No Citizen at Greenwich ever eat
More Fry, or White-bait at an annual Treat:
Though he had ſtarved himſelf two days before,
That he might gormandize ſo much the more.

To JOVE once more the FROGS prefer a pray'r:
"" Humbly entreating him their lives to ſpare:—
"" Withdraw the *Stork:* for till he is withdrawn,
"" Nor can the males make love, nor females ſpawn,
"" In ſafety. Soon of Frogs will be an end,
"" Unleſs ſome Stork-killer ſhould ſtand their friend.
"" For, can they think of Miſtreſſes or Wives,
"" Who are not ſure one minute of their lives?""

JOVE knit his brows; and angrily replied,—
' Ye have brought on your ruin, by your pride.
' The happieſt Nation in the world ye were:
' Unſhackled, uncontroul'd; no King, no care.

'Sated with happineſs, Ye needs would be
'Exalted;—rather would be great, than free.
'Inclined to make you quiet, if I cou'd,
'I ſent a harmleſs King, a Log of Wood.
'But ye would not with ſuch be ſatisfied:
'Ye would an *active one*:—by your *own choice* abide.'

For Nations to be bleſt, they muſt be free.
Republicans. Or,—ruled,—their King ſhould be
Inert,—and next to a non-entity.
Too active Spirits jealouſy create.
With iron ſceptre Tyrants rule a State.
Their wretched Subjects of their wealth they drain,
Themſelves at home in ſplendour to maintain.
Or if to War addicted, much they load
Their People, to acquire a name abroad.

FABLE

FABLE XXXIII.

The BITCH, *and the* HIND.

A Fox accuſtom'd to divert
Himſelf with ſcribbling poetry,
Without intending it had hurt
A BITCH of his vicinity.

His Satire was not aim'd at her;
For not till afterwards he knew,
It hit ſo well her character;
And that ſhe was a very Shrew.

Nathleſs She every where abuſed
The Fox.—'Lud! Madam;—have you ſeen
'His verſes?—Miſs; have you peruſed
'His Tale?—What can the Creature mean?'

"You need not, ſure, (replies a HIND;)
"The meaning of the Tale be told:
"Nothing is eaſier to find:———
"The Moral is,—*We muſt not—ſcold.*

"'Tis odious; and 'tis fooliſh, too:
"Why ſhould we ſtrain our little lungs?
"Bland looks, and mild addreſs will do
"More than a thouſand brazen tongues."

FABLE

FABLE XXXIV.

The HARE, *and the* FROGS.

A HARE unprincipled of life was tired:
One, who old Roman *cowardice* admired:
That *little* act by the *great* CATO done;
And not enough reproved by ADDISON.
The ills of life much more than death he fear'd;
And ſuicide as heroiſm he revered.
Nervous his caſe. At the leaſt noiſe he heard
He ſtarted. When the wind the branches ſtirr'd,
They to his agitated fancy ſeem
Or Men, or Dogs, come in purſuit of him.
'There was no other creature to be found
'So curſt; (he ſaid:) and wiſh'd that he were drown'd.'

Diſtraught with ſpleen, with ſullenneſs and pride,
One day he walk'd towards the river's ſide,
Intent on death. Herbs by the way he ate
Of force the ſenſes to intoxicate,
And lull the thought of an hereafter ſtate.
Ere now the fool had plung'd him headlong in;
Ere now his Ghoſt in Tartarus had been;—
Had not ſome FROGS, that near the river were,
Scared at that formidable beaſt—a HARE,—
Precipitately fled.—'O, ho!—(ſays He:)—
'Are there, then, Animals afraid of me?

I'm

'I 'm of more conſequence than erſt I thought:
'And will no longer ſet my life at nought.
'I will not drown me. No:—I thank thee, JOVE,
'In name of all our Species, for thy love:—
'Abundant love: in that thou didſt not pleaſe
'To make us HARES—as timorous as theſe.'

Would impious Man, when ſtanding on the brink
Of ſelf-deſtruction, pauſe awhile, and think
How many Creatures in the world there be
Worſe off,—more abject,—wretcheder than he:
Inſtead of aggravating fancied woes,
He would confeſs how *much* to *Providence* he owes.

Every Writer who has told this Fable, from ESOP, the Inventor, down to honeſt CROXALL, has told it, as of the whole race of HARES going to drown themſelves: than which nothing can be more ridiculouſly imagined. We hear now and then of an individual weak and wicked enough to make away with himſelf: but to repreſent a *whole nation*,—nay more—a *whole ſpecies* as about to do ſo, is to burleſque a ſubject which requires ſurely to be treated with great ſolemnity.

FABLE

FABLE XXXV.

The THIEF, *and his* MOTHER.

FOR *young* folks commonly are told
Fables; but this is for the *old:*
For Parents, Guardians, Maſters, All
To whoſe diſcretion Children fall.

Early correct what 's done amiſs;
For Habit Second-Nature is.

INDIGNA had an only CHILD,
Which, as an only one, ſhe ſpoil'd.
(Pray Madam;—look me in the face;—
Tell me; is this your Urchin's caſe?
If 'tis, reform him young, ere you
Have cauſe his fatal end to rue.)
INDIGNA's pleaſure was to ſee
Her TONY's tricks and waggery:
However miſchievous, her TONY
Still was her *Jewel*,—*Joy*,—and *Honey*. *

* *Jewel*—is a cant name of endearment all over England; *Joy*—is peculiar to the North; and *Honey* to Ireland. As there are fooliſh Mothers, and roguiſh Boys of every diſtrict, the Reader is at liberty to apply the Story wherever he thinks proper.

No wonder every day he did
Miſchief: for never being chid,
How ſhould he good from evil learn?—
How the right way from wrong diſcern?
By Nature's ſimple guidance?———No:
To *Education* 'tis we owe
Our moral excellence. It lies
In that, to make us good and wiſe.
'Tis *Diſcipline* muſt exorciſe
The dev'liſh paſſions which within
Us domineer. The ſeeds of Sin,
If ſuffered deeply to take root,
Will ſcarcely e'er be gotten out.

As Man, as well as Beaſts, delights
In gratifying appetites,
Gluttons, and Drunkards all would be,
If Nature got the maſtery.

Children (but little Men) will ſteal
To furniſh a luxurious meal:
Sometimes for wantonneſs. And lie
Swear, and forſwear, for Property.

As early as you can define
The terms poſſeſſive "thine," and "mine."

To

To which diſtinctions *civil* add
Knowledge of what is good and bad
In *morals*: with which intermix
Religion. You 'll be ſure to fix
His principles: and you may truſt
Him ſafely: he will e'er be juſt.

Not ſo her Son INDIGNA taught:
With no ſuch leſſons was he fraught.
TONY was left at large, to play
His precious infant hours away,
Without correction, or controul.
He was not ſent, till late, to ſchool:
And when he was, INDIGNA's pray'r
Was,—"" from the cruel birch to ſpare
"" Her darling, only Son, and Heir."'
Such ſtore ſhe ſet by this her jewel:
And kind was,—only to be cruel. *
TONY, by habit idle, took
To miſchief, more than to his book.
And being from correction free
Practiſed all kinds of roguery.
For parts he had; and might have vied
In good; but being miſapplied,
He eminently bad became:
And grew into opprobrious fame.

* *I muſt be cruel, only to be kind.* SHAKSP.

By

By his addreſs he cheated Boys
Both of their money, and their toys.
And, beſide what he won at play,
He pilfer'd ſomething every day;
Which cunningly he carried home.
INDIGNA, joy'd to ſee him come,
Inſtead of whipping him, or other
Puniſhment grave, this fooliſh Mother
Was wont her TONY to careſs,
And praiſe him for his cleverneſs.
At length he got to ſuch a paſs
Of wickedneſs, expell'd he was
From School. And now—too late alas!—
INDIGNA grieved ſhe had not done
Her duty better by her Son.
In vain ſhe now began to preach.
Nothing was ſafe within his reach.
So thoroughly adept was he
In ſlight-of-hand, and thievery,
He ſtole—(which one could ſcarce ſuppoſe)—
Her ſpectacles from off her noſe,

Though TONY's dexterity may ſuffer by a compariſon with MERCURY's, I cannot reſiſt the pleaſure of tranſcribing a Stanza from the great Lyric Bard; which if it did not furniſh me the idea, immediately after occurred.

Te, boves olim niſi reddidiſſes
Per dolum amotas, puerum minaci
Voce dum terret, viduus pharetrâ
Riſit Apollo.

Whilſt ſhe a draw'r was looking o'er
For ſomething he had ſtol'n before.

His Boyhood badly gotten through,
Much was ſhe puzzled what to do
With TONY come to man's eſtate:
And dreaded what might be his fate.
Too true her apprehenſions bode:
He took, at twenty, to *the Road.*
Robbery, which he early made
His practice, now became his Trade.—
Moſt perilous, precarious one!
Ere many months his courſe was run.
Detected in a Robbery,
Taken, and tried: condemn'd to die.
Before the fatal cord was tied
He begg'd to ſpeak a word aſide
Unto his weeping Mother; who
Had come to take a laſt adieu.
INDIGNA drew her TONY near;
And putting cloſe her head to hear;
He ſuddenly bit off her ear.

The Standers-by a deep groan fetch,
Shock'd at ſo barbarous a wretch:
And with one general voice they ſaid,—
"" Hang him:—'tis fit that he were dead.'"

The

The Felon penitently bow'd:
Then thus beſpoke the angry Crowd.
'I wonder not, Spectators, you
'Are ſhock'd at what you 've ſeen me do.
'Moſt ſtrange it muſt appear that I,
'*Launching into eternity*,
'By ſuch a crime ſhould aggravate
'Punition in my after-ſtate.
'But know,—this Woman, which you ſee,
'This *Mother* 't was, that ruin'd me.
'Had I, when early I tranſgreſs'd,
'Been flagellated;—not careſs'd:—
'Had I been puniſh'd, as I ought,
'I had not to this end been brought.'

FABLE XXXVI.

The MONKEY *and the* HORSE.

A Rider, alias Traveller,
MONKEY yclept the Beaſts among,
Would fain ſet up a character
For humour, merriment, and ſong.

Into whatever place he came
Antics he play'd; affected fun.
And if he thought a Creature tame,
Him he was ſure to play upon.

At Aſſes, and at Mules expence
The laugh ſo often had he raiſed,
He ventured once to give offence
To a brave HORSE which near him grazed.

The HORSE with patience heard him out,
But when the fool grinn'd ſelf-applauſe,
Laſh'd out indignantly his foot,
And broke the ſaucy MONKEY's jaws.

Would every one his vengeance wreak
On ſuch pert fools, it were no matter.
Who cannot to good purpoſe ſpeak,
Had better not attempt to chatter.

FABLE

FABLE XXXVII.

The MAN, *and the* TIPULA.

A Group of Gnats a MAN moleſt,
A TIPULA amongſt the reſt.
The MAN in anger ſwoop'd his hand;—
(Boys who catch flies will underſtand:)
The TIPULA alone was ta'en;
And juſt when going to be ſlain,
For mercy thus the MAN addreſt:
'I never hurt you; I proteſt.
'Search for my ſting: examine me.
'As Naturaliſt—you 'll find, that we
'TIPULAS, though in body, wings,
'And legs, like Gnats,—yet have no ſtings.'

"It may be ſo; (the MAN replies:)
"But though by theſe my proper eyes
"Convinced, you ne'ertheleſs ſhould die—
"*For keeping ſuch bad company.*"

FABLE

FABLE XXXVIII.

The BOY, *and the* GOLDFINCH.

OUT of its Cage a GOLDFINCH by good luck
Eſcaped; and to a neighbouring thicket took
Its flight. 'T was follow'd by its little MASTER
With aching eyes; lamenting his diſaſter.
As 't was impoſſible the Bird to reach,
The cunning Rogue attempted by fair ſpeech
To win upon the GOLDFINCH; and engage
The Rover to return to his old Cage.
'Mongſt other things the artful Youngſter ſaid;—
'You little think how poorly you 'll be fed.
'Not as with me, ſupplied with fineſt ſeed;
'And every thing of which you ſtood in need.
'How can you, GOLDY, wiſh abroad to range?
'All things about you muſt appear moſt ſtrange.
'Accuſtom'd to a calm, domeſtic life,
'How will you brook the buſtle, noiſe, and ſtrife
'Which you will meet with? Enemies you 'll find
'Numberleſs; not except your proper kind.
'You as an Interloper they will treat,—
'A Stranger Gueſt, come to devour their meat.
'Ere ſettled in a comfortable home
'Miſchances many may upon you come.

'Return,

'Return, then, GOLDY; and as heretofore
'I 'll love you; or—if poſſible—yet more.'

"I thank you (ſays the GOLDFINCH) for your love.
"'Tis not from that I 'm anxious to remove,
"But from the *Cage*. Reſtraint does not agree
"With noble Spirits. I would needs be free.
"Come what, come may,—*I 've got my liberty.*"

Which ſaid, directly out of ſight he flew;
Still chirping, as he went;—"I 'm *free*:—adieu;
[adieu."

Come what, come may.]
SHAKSP.

FABLE

FABLE XXXIX.

WISDOM'S *Dictate.*

AS FORTUNE with her Child one day
Airing, met PALLAS in her way;
'Dear Sister, be ſo kind (ſays ſhe)
'With your advice to favour me.
'This Child of mine is beautiful;
'And amiable;—yet far from dull.
'Her dow'r will be immenſe, you know.
'Now tell me, PALLAS, what to do,
'Not only to prevent diſtreſs,—
'But to enſure her happineſs.'

WISDOM, who could not err, replied,—
"Let her have VIRTUE for her Guide."

FABLE

FABLE XL.

The LAP-DOG, *and the* ASS.

OUR talents we muſt nicely weigh,
Would we be ſafe from ridicule.
Blockheads ſhould not affect to play
With Wit; it is a ſharp-edged tool.

A Countryman a LAP-DOG kept;
A favourite one, that play'd, ate, ſlept
The Children with: whate'er their fun
TYCHO was ſure of making one.
Though he pleaſed every body, yet,
None liked him half ſo well as BET.
She took the trouble once a week
To waſh him clean, and comb him ſleek.
Near her, or on her knees he ſat
At meals; and niceſt morſels ate
Out of her hand, or off her plate.

A jealous JACK-ASS, who perceived
How favour went, was greatly grieved.
And thus was overheard one day
In deep ſoliloquy to bray:——

'Say, great LEUCIPPUS, EPICURUS,
'Ye learn'd Men-Aſſes, who aſſure us
'That every thing was made by Chance,
'Say, in the Atoms firſt grand Dance,
'Was it not, think ye, very hard
'That my Progenitor was marr'd
'In making? Had it come to paſs,
'Inſtead of being a mere Aſs,
'His atomies had clang together
'In ſhape of Horſe,—or Lap-Dog rather,
'Then I, like TYCHO had been bleſs'd;
'Made much of, fondled, and careſs'd.
'See how the envied Creature ſtands
'Neſtling its head in BETSY's hands!
'Why makes ſhe about him this fuſs?
'What is the diff'rence betwixt us?
'Is it becauſe the little Wretch
'Can ſit-an-end;—and fawn;—and fetch
'And carry;—and jump over ſticks;—
'And other ſuch like eaſy tricks?
'I warrant I could do as much,
'If I 'd deſcend to trifles ſuch.
'This very afternoon will I,—
'Yes, I 'm reſolved upon 't, I 'll try.
'Firſt,—I muſt learn *to give the pat*:—
'There 's nothing difficult in that.
'At ſuppertime I 'll take my place
'By BAUCIS; and I 'll ſtroke her face;

'And

'And pat her Cheeks; and ſteal a kiſs;—
'No;—not of Madam;—but, of Miſs:
'I'll kiſs the Daughter: any other,—
'BALL, if he will, may kiſs the Mother.'

Though you may think the Ass abſurd,
Or joking; faith, he kept his word.
Into the Hall he hies to ſup;
And ſits him down upon his croup,
Cloſe by the lovely BETSY's ſide:
And looks about with no leſs pride
Than an intruding Burgher, who
A viſit makes SIR BRIBEWELL to;
And being preſs'd to ſtay and dine
Is ſeated by MY LADY fine.
The only difference is this,—
One is not aſk'd, the other is.

When TYCHO ſaw the Ass approach
His Miſtreſs, near enough to touch
Almoſt, he bark'd; as well he might:
And ſhow'd his teeth,—but durſt not bite.
The Family are in a pother:
The Children bawl one to another.
"Why! look ye, now, at yonder Bee-aſt!—
"He 's come to keep our Whitſon Fee-aſt."

SUSAN, the ſimple Servant Maid,
At the ſtrange ſight was much afraid.

Starting

Starting aſide, ſhe tumbled o'er
A ſtool; and ſprawl'd upon the floor.
There trembling, panting as ſhe lay,
Thus fervently began to pray.
'Great JOVE avert from us all evil.
'Save from this four-legg'd aſs-like Devil
'Me, wicked Wretch: I 'll never ſin
'Again:—do nought but ſew, and ſpin.
'Come FRANK, come THOMAS, when they may,
'I 'll *vartuous* be; and ſay 'em "Nay."
'Not ev'n my favourite, Valet HARRY,
'Shall kiſs me more,—unleſs he 'll marry.
'Save me from this foul fiend.'——She ſaid;
And in her apron hid her head.

BAUCIS, though now a Farmer's Wife,
Had in the former part of life
Been in a Lady's ſervice; where
The home-taught, hopeful Son and Heir
By Pedagogus every matin
Was coax'd to read a page of Latin:
By often hearing OVID read,
Or talk'd of, took it in her head
That all the ſimple Tales he told
Had truly happ'd in days of old.
In ſhort, the learned Farmereſs
Believed in Metamorphoſes.

She

She ſpies the ASS; and thinks it odd is;
Yet ſtill has hope that it ſome God is:—
" Who knows but fornicating JOVE,
" Who once turn'd Bull-calf to make love,
" And carried off EUROPA, may
" Intend ſome amorous prank to play
" With BETSY?—And in truth, my Daughter
" May make e'en JUPITER's Mouth water."

So argued BAUCIS: but her HUB,
Plain Man, began his head to ſcrub.
Of OVID's tales he nothing knew;
Nor what his Wife alluded to.
Scarcely could he forbear from laughter,
To think a GOD ſhould like his Daughter:
Howe'er, not coveting the honour
Of ſeeing JUPITER upon her;
Behind the ASS he took his ſtand
With oaken cudgel in his hand;
And juſt as JACK his paw uprears,
Gave him a ſtroke betwixt the ears:
Another;—and another;—till
JACK, finding he was uſed ſo ill,
Set up a loud and hideous bray,
That ſtunn'd them all: and ran away.

FABLE

FABLE XLI.

The ANTELOPE, *and the* STAG.

AN ANTELOPE, who got a wound,
Himſelf ſequeſter'd from the herd;
And dying, by a STAG was found,
Who thus put in a well-meant word.

'It hurts me much, my friend, to hear
'Of your miſhap, but more to ſee
'You thus; with no acquaintance near,
'Nor any of your family.

'Permit me, Sir, to ſend your Wife,
'Your Children to you;—and your Friends:
'Although they can not ſave your life;—
'Kindneſs to conſolation tends."

"How little (ſays the ANTELOPE)
"Know you of true philoſophy!
"I 'd ſend, if I of life had hope;—
"But not to let them ſee me die.

"My wound, long ſince I underſtood,
"Nor cure admits of, nor relief:
"Since, then, my Friends can do no good,—
"Wherefore ſhould they partake my grief?"

FABLE

FABLE XLII.

The BOY, *and the* BUTTERFLY.

A Truant SCHOOLBOY rambling in a field,
A BUTTERFLY moſt beautiful beheld,
And gave it chace: from flow'r to flow'r it flew;
Out of his reach, but ſtill within his view.
The BOY, with pertinacity endued,
Faſt as it fled, as eagerly purſued;
Until the BUTTERFLY, fatigued at length,
Settled upon a flow'r without the ſtrength
To riſe again. The BOY, for fear it ſhou'd,
Sprang at the FLY as nimbly as he cou'd:
But, with ſo violent a graſp he ſeized,
Marr'd the fine colours which his eye had pleaſed.
That now, inſtead of giving him delight,
The BUTTERFLY was hateful to his ſight.
The verieſt Reptile that e'er crawl'd the earth
Seem'd now of equal, or ſuperior worth.

The moral of this Fable I deduce,—
(Leſt you miſtake it,)—Reader, for your uſe.
You are the BOY: your *ſcheme of happineſs*
A FLY—by allegory we expreſs.

Pleaſure

Pleaſure 's the Object we have all in view,—
The gewgaw Inſect which we all purſue.
And if we rudely ſeize it, we deſtroy
Our bliſs; ourſelves annihilate our joy.
Let us not be too eager in the chace;—
The Object not too ardently embrace.
By theſe, and only by theſe means we may
Protract our Pleaſures to our lateſt day.

FABLE

FABLE XLIII.

The LEARNED-DOG, *and the* DUNCE.

A Boy of parts, and yet a DUNCE——
'*How can that be?—What both at once?*'

Why not?—Parts are but faculties
Which dormant left, leave men unwiſe.
Parts are no more than latent worth
Which *Education* muſt call forth.

'*In what conſiſteth Education?*—
'*Muſt we by Terrour, Emulation,*
'*Or Hope:—by which, or all combined,*
'*Affect we moſt the infant mind?*'

With diff'rent Children diff'rent ways
(Deſpite of what HELVETIUS ſays)
Muſt be purſued. The *temper* ſtrike:
No two are organized alike.
This Boy the Rod alone regards;
That is excited by Rewards.
But 'tis my preſent Fable's aim
To ſhow, that nothing works like *SHAME.*

ROBERT—or BOB, for ſhortneſs, we
Will call him,—had capacity;

Yet, by ſome unaccountable
Perverſeneſs, could not read, nor ſpell,
Not ev'n his name at ſix years old.
'T was not for want of being told
Often enough; for never Lad
More worthy, anxious Parents had:
The Mother in particular.
The taſk of teaching fell to her.
For Children's tender years demand
Indulgence more than reprimand.
And Women hold a tighter rein
Over their tempers than we Men:—
As far as *Teaching* goes.—I wou'd
Not boundleſsly be underſtood.

Infinite pains PERDIGNA took
To make her Urchin mind his book.
She begg'd, or bribed him every day
To try his Alphabet to ſay.
Frequently brought him freſh ſupplies
Of gilded Books from NEWBERY'S.
The Pictures BOB examined well;
But not a letter would he tell.
The Bodkin, twofold Implement,
Oft in the bootleſs ſervice bent.
You, Reader *gentle*,—if you be,
And bleſs'd with ſenſibility
To reliſh a domeſtic ſcence,—
May have obſerved,—and have, I ween,—

An

An intereſting little Print,—
(Etching perhaps, or Metzotint, *)
" THE PRUDENT MOTHER " call'd; in which
A Matron anxious ſeems to teach
A Boy his Letters. But while She
Is pointing with her Bodkin, He
Turns his arch eyes another way;
Reſolved his leſſon not to ſay:
And, that he may not even hear,
He ſtops perverſely either ear.

* *Mezzotinto.*] It is very well the Rhime obliged me to cut off the *o* final; as, by ſo doing, and changing the firſt *z* into a *t*, I have preſerved as much as need be of the Italian Sound; and at the ſame time have *angliciſed* the word: as ought to be all foreign words which it is found expedient to adopt.

Rich as our Language already is, I am very far from wiſhing not to enrich it yet more by the acquiſition of foreign Words, be they Italian, French, Latin, or Greek, or from whatever ſource they be; *quocunque de fonte cadunt*;—*ſi parce diſtorta*:—that is,—upon condition they be ſuited to our pronunciation, and orthography. But I enter my formal proteſt againſt the adoption of frivolous French Words, *accentuated* to be ſpoken as they are at PARIS. It becomes the dignity of JOHN BULL to reject them at all times, but more eſpecially in ſolemn diſcourſe, or in Books of Science.

Who would have expected to meet with the word *opiniâtreté* in the very elegant and ſcientific Work of a Profeſſor of one of our Univerſities?—

If the learned Prelate, to whoſe Work I allude, ſhould perchance ſee this my curſory animadverſion, he will not, I hope, attribute it to any want of reſpect in me. No one is a greater admirer of his Lordſhip's literary talents;—his erudition, his ſcience, his manlineſs, and liberality of ſentiments.—It was the excellency, indeed, of his Writings, that attracted my critical obſervation. Had his language in general been leſs highly poliſhed, ſo ſlight a flaw would not have been diſcernible. It is a faint ſpot upon the Sun's diſk; which in a leſs luminous Orb had not been viſible.

Our

Our little Bob was ſuch another
Urchin; and harraſs'd ſo his Mother.
What prudence dictated, ſhe did;
Sometimes ſhe coax'd him, ſomteimes chid:
Without effect. The Father lent
His aid: inflicted puniſhment
Corporal: and confined him too:
Of play abridged him. Nought would do.

Sure, never worthy Parents were
Plagued with a more unworthy Heir.

By chance into their country came
A Dog of literary fame:
Who,—beſides cuſtomary tricks,
Jumping through hoops, and over ſticks,—
Could ſpell a name; and pick out letters,
Better than many of his Betters.

Shock's wonderous qualities, and worth
Were in a Hand-Bill blazon'd forth.
All which his Maſter, Signor Presto,
Himſelf a Conj'rer, gave atteſt to.
'INVITING *all the Neighbourhood*;—
'*Not* gratis, *be it underſtood*;—
'*For, every one, by juſt gradation,*
'*Is tax'd according to his ſtation.*

'To

'*To* private Audiences SHOCK *goes*,
'*And lectures* KINGS—under the *ROSE*.*
'DUKES-ROYAL (Hiſtory, alaſs!
Shows us, what looks like Gold, is Braſs,
Oft times: I mean, that DUKES there are,
Or have been, who beſtow'd leſs care
Upon the Muſes, than the Fair.
Love-letters paſs'd; and all was well:
They ſcribbled, though they could not ſpell.†)
'*If there be ſuch unlettered* NINNY-
'HIGHNESSES *now, pay—HALF-A-GUINEA.*
'MARQUISES, EARLS, and VISCOUNTS, *down*
'*To Iriſh* BARONS, *pay a—CROWN.*
'PEERESSES, LADIES, BARONETS,
'*And ſimple* KNIGHTS, and BANNERETS,
'*At—TWO-AND-SIXPENCE.* L. L. D.'s
'*And* F. R. S.'s—*WHAT THEY PLEASE.*
'*As Literati Brothers, they*
'*Are welcome, though they ſhould not pay.*

* SIGNOR PRESTO meant to pun, no doubt; the '*Roſe*' not ſtanding only as part of a Cant Phraſe, but for an ancient Gold Coin, value about ſixteen ſhillings.

† *Quere*,—Were not certain Letters to a certain LADY ill-ſpelt on purpoſe? Was it not Ignorance *put on*, together with the Black Wig, by way of diſguiſe? For his HIGHNESS's Credit we will ſuppoſe ſo.

All

'*All lower Ranks of Perſons willing*
'*To hear the Lecture, pay a—SHILLING*;
'CHILDREN *except: whom* SHOCK *will teach,*
'*(In lap, or not,) at—SIX-PENCE each.*
'*With* Nota Bene, BOYS *who ſkipp'd*
'*This Leſſon, would be ſurely whipp'd.*
'*Punition worſe for* GIRLS *who miſs'd,*
'*For they were never to be kiſs'd.*

'*The Doors to ope at Six o'Clock:*
'*So*—VIVANT REX, ET DOCTOR SHOCK.'

BOB's Father, humouring the joke,
Much of SHOCK's parts, and learning ſpoke.
'How happy muſt his Parents be,
'To have ſo learn'd a Whelp as He!
'I fear our two-legg'd Cur will never,
'With all our pains, be half as clever.
'A DOG turn'd Schoolmaſter! My Dear,'

"Wonderful!—BOBBY, do you hear,
"And bluſh not?—You, who do not know
"Yet how to ſay your Chris-croſs-Row."

Archly enough the Boy replies;
"'I know, Mamma, I am not wiſe:
"'But, yet, I am not ſuch a fool
"'To think a DOG can keep a School."'

Pleaſed

Pleaſed with his *naivety* * they ſmiled;
But ſtill would fain perſuade the Child
It was ſo. If he doubted it,
They challenged him to ſet his wit
Againſt the DOG's: that is, to try
Which read the better, by and by:
For, if he durſt engage him, they
Would go to SHOCK that very day.
A fair propoſal. BOB agreed:
For though he knew he could not read
Himſelf,—doubting the Stories told
Of SHOCK,—and naturally bold,—
He was reſolved the Dog to meet:
Nor fear'd, nor thought of a defeat.

The Parties all ſet of in glee
The learned Animal to ſee.

Arrived; the Father tips the wink
To PRESTO.—To what end d' ye think?
—'To notice BOB; and taſk him.'—Good.
PRESTO the ſignal underſtood.

* *Naivety.*] The French word *Naïveté* is creeping into uſe with us: and as a word of great delicacy and force, (denoting ſomething more than *Simplicity,*) it is well worthy adoption:—but, not *as* a French word. It is very abſurd in us, to ſpeak it, and ſpell it ſo accentuated: particularly as to its final *e*; which is ſo oppoſite to the genius of the Engliſh Language, that it can never, in that ſtate, be naturalized. I have, therefore, ſlightly varied its ſpelling. A rule I have preſcribed to myſelf for *angliciſing* all foreign words not conformable to Engliſh pronunciation. Which rule, if the Public Critics *(Quos penes arbitrium eſt, et jus et norma loquendi)* think well of it, I hope, they will paſs it into Law.

Alphabets

Alphabets ranged upon the ground:
SHOCK was call'd in; and looking round
The crouded Room, reſpectfully
Bow'd thrice to all the Company.
Whether by finger, foot, or what,
Or how,—to us it matters not,—
But PRESTO had contrived, no doubt,
Some how to ſingle ROBERT out:
For up to him directly goes
The Dog, and takes him by his cloaths;
Nor will return, nor from him ſtir:
Which PRESTO, his interpreter,
Said,—'Was the only way he had
'Of making known what clever Lad
'He wiſh'd to cope with: and if He,—
'MASTER,—before that Company
'Durſt prove his ſcholarſhip, SHOCK wou'd
'The ſame; and beat him, if he cou'd.'

BOB bluſh'd; and down his eyes he caſt:
But recollecting he had paſt
His word: he told the man he wou'd:
"'And let SHOCK beat him,—if he cou'd.'"

'Pleaſe, little Sir, to come this way.
'SHOCK will come, too; I dare to ſay.'

Together lovingly they come
Into the middle of the Room.

'Firſt

'First, pretty Maſter, what's your name?'
"'BOB.'"

'Know you how to ſpell the ſame?'

The Urchin gave the man a jog:
"'Nay, aſk that queſtion of your Dog.'"

'He 'll tell it me; and what's more odd,
'Will tell you how to ſpell a *Rod*.
'SHOCK!—you 've the converſation heard;
'And Maſter's Name: come, ſpell the word.
'If you one letter miſs, you know
'Who ſupperleſs to bed will go.—
'BOB is an eaſy name to ſpell:—
'Begin:—take heed: and do it well.'

The Dog walks thrice the letters round
Ranged in two circles on the ground.
Then 'twixt his teeth takes up a "'B;'"
And ſhews it to the Company.
"'O,'" next:— and then another "'B.'"
Which they with admiration ſee.
"'Bravo!'" they cry; and clap their hands:
All except BOB. Confuſed he ſtands:
Now bluſhing; and now pale, by turns:
His breaſt with indignation burns;
And ſhame commix'd: their plaudits ſeem
Intended raillery on him.

His ſpirit can not brook diſgrace;
So, he reſolves to quit the place.
His Father fain would have him ſtay;
But BOB will not: he hies away,
Faſt as he can. And when at home;
Hurried directly to his room,
And ſullenly flung into bed;
Without acquainting Man or Maid
Of his arrival: there he lay,
Brooding o'er what had happ'd that day.

BOB's Parents, inly pleaſed to find
That Shame was working in his mind,
Thought better not to interrupt
His muſings: and without him ſupp'd.
His Mother only previouſly
Juſt peep'd into his Room to ſee
That he was ſafe: his whim admir'd;
And, without ſaying ought, retired.

Shame and vexation ſo poſſeſt
The Infant, that he could not reſt:
But reaſoning with himſelf he lay:—
"" What will my friends and playmates ſay,
"" (Many of whom are not ſo old
"" As I am,) when they ſhall be told
"" A *Dog* diſgraced me?—Envied SHOCK!
"" Thee they will praiſe, and me they 'll mock.

"" And

"" And is there, then, no way t' efface
"" Remembrance of this dire diſgrace?
"" Yes; there 's one way, and only one:—
"" To do as much as SHOCK has done:
"" Or more. Tomorrow I will get
"" By heart,—will *ſay* my Alphabet,
"" Which he cannot. At break of day
"" I 'll to it; and I will not play
"" Till every letter I can ſay.'"

This reſolution form'd, he found
It balſam to his feſtering wound.
So good Reſolves for ever are:
They ſoothe the Soul ſunk down with care;
And ſave it from the fiend—Deſpair.

ROBERT at early morn aroſe;
Haſtily huddled on his cloaths:
Deſcends into the Parlour; looks
Out one of his own little Books.
The gilded cover back he turns
Indignantly; the pictures ſpurns;
And ſeriouſly his Letters learns.

Pleaſed were his Parents when they ſpied
Their youngſter ſo well occupied.
The Father cries;—' I 'm very glad
' To find you grown a ſtudious Lad.'

The

The Mother;—" Love, why did not you
" Call in as you were uſed to do?
" You know you ſhould not come down ſtairs
" Until we 've heard you ſay your pray'rs."

"" Forgive me, dear Mamma; I pray:
"" I 'll not do ſo another day.
"" I roſe betimes that I might get,
"" Ere you were up, my Alphabet:
"" Which I am perfect in: Will you
"" Hear me?—And teach me ſomething new?
"" For, I 'm reſolved on 't, every day
"" Long leſſons as I can to ſay.
"" In Learning all my time I 'll paſs:
"" Not be the Blockhead that I was."'

From that auſpicious hour he took
So great a liking to his book,
A Claſſic Scholar he became
Ere long. O, bleſt effect of SHAME!

May I conſtruct a uſeful hint on
This Tale, for WESTMONAST: *et* WINTON:
And other Seminaries, where
Ferules or Rods in uſage are?
I would not have thoſe laid aſide
Wholly: but, Shame ſhould be applied

As

As an auxiliar. Youths there are
Who corp'ral puniſhment can bear
However ſharp; and glory in
The hardneſs, toughneſs of their *Skin*:
But Ignominy, and Reproach
The moſt obdurate *Minds* will touch.

There 's not a Nation on the earth
Has Men of ſuch acknowledged worth,
As England has, for MASTERS;—would
They but exert them, as they could.
What pity 'tis that Indolence
Should get the better of Good-ſenſe!
They 'd rather tread in the old path
Which many a BUSBY *beaten* hath,
Than ſtrike a new one out: their wand,
The *Rod*, is ever in their hand.
Let GALLIA's Beaſts of burden feel,
Slaves as they are, the whip and ſteel:
But the free Courſers of our Iſle
Should make a pleaſure of their toil.
By Hope, by Emulation they
Should be incited on their way.
If theſe not goad them on to fame,
The proper puniſhment is—SHAME.

FABLE

FABLE XLIV.

The LION, *and the* THREE BULLS.

WITH longing eye KING LEO watch'd
Three BULLS that lived in amity.
But, likely to be over match'd,
His ſtrength he durſt not with them try.

The BULLS, however, quarrelling
At laſt; no ſooner was it known
That they were parted, than the KING
Fell on, and kill'd them, *one by one*.

If not for love, for ſafety ſake,
We leagues of amity ſhould make;
Which nothing ſhould have power to break.

Ουτως ομονοια τοις χρωμενοις σωτηριον. Says APHTHONIUS, in his dry way.

FABLE

FABLE XLV.

The COCK *finding a* DIAMOND.

A COCK a-ſcratching up the ground
In ſearch of food, a DIAMOND found,
Which ſpurning from him, 'Pſhaw! (ſays he;)
'A Gem is of no uſe to me.
'Ladies, or Lapidaries might
'In ſuch a bawble take delight:—
'Its cut, and colour would admire,
'Perhaps;—its largeneſs, or its fire.
'To me how welcomer a prize—
'A Barley-corn of half its ſize!'

An *Ignoramus* HEIR-AT-LAW,
Rummaging over Papers, ſaw
A MANUSCRIPT, in crabbed hand,
Of which he did not underſtand
A ſyllable. "Perhaps, (ſays he,)
"This might ineſtimable be
"In ſome learn'd Antiquary's eyes,
"But how much welcomer a prize
"To me—a Bond, or Banker's Note!
"Foregad! I would not give a groat
"For all the Manuſcripts on Earth.
"Inſooth, I wonder of what worth
"The muſty things in the Muſeum!
"Who will may read 'em,—ſo I never ſee 'em."

FABLE

FABLE XLVI.

The CAVALIER, *and his* HORSE.

A CAVALIER, who had a HORSE that ſhied
At every thing almoſt, and ſprang aſide,
Finding correction was but thrown away,
Thus reaſon'd with the animal one day.
'Why, what a blockhead, coward wretch you are,
'To let that harmleſs thing, a Jack-Aſs ſcare
'Such a ſtrong beaſt! Suppoſe that he were bent
'On an attack,—(by way of argument,)—
'Have you not Hoofs to ſtrike with,—Teeth to tear?
'Aſhame upon you! What have you to fear?'

"'Tis very true; the candid HORSE replied:
"Blockhead I am: it cannot be denied.
"I bluſh to think how very terrible
"Things have appear'd till I have ſeen 'em well:
"And then, moſt readily I ridicule
"My fears; and inly call myſelf a Fool.
"But how much greater fool I 've known *you* be.
"You ſtart at things you neither hear, nor ſee;
"At fancied objects; Phantoms, Ghoſts, and Sprites;—
"Creations of your brain, and murky nights.
"A truce, good Maſter: till you grow more wiſe
"Yourſelf, it is not fit you ſhould *philoſophize*."

FABLE

FABLE XLVII.

The SQUIRE, *the* MOLE, *and the* BLACKBIRD.

A GRESTIS in the Country bred
With country notions in his head,—
I mean, ſuch notions primitive,
As, how much better 'tis to live
In plenty on one's own eſtate
Than out-at-elbows with the Great.
Wretched the Man, depraved the mind
That cannot in the Country find
Amuſement. The Metropolis
Affords but artificial bliſs.—
Nay;—'tis a word's miſuſe to call
Intoxication Bliſs at all.
To loſe the firſt of bleſſings, health,
In waſting,—or acquiring wealth;
To court ambition; and to toil
For honours;—is it worth our while?
To go the rounds of diſſipation;
To ſet, or follow every faſhion
That folly can invent;—is this
What Beings rational call Bliſs?

To live to Luxury: to try
By every means to multiply
Our wants—*but* thoſe to gratify;
At whatſoever riſk, expence;
Againſt religion, morals, ſenſe:
To let vice triumph; and inſult
Honour: call poverty a fault,
And riches worth:———But I 'll not preach.
My Fable's purport is *to teach*
Men what is Happineſs: to drive
Them from great Cities where they live
In ſplendid miſery, and riot,—
To rural ſcenes—to bliſs and quiet.

The *Country* far from being dull,
He muſt a dullard be and fool
Himſelf that cannot find out ways
Of paſſing pleaſantly his days.
People of any taſte may bring
Themſelves to fancy Gardening;
Adorning Grounds, or Botany;
Or honourable Huſbandry.

Honourable Huſbandry.] The unambitious Squire, whoſe daily employ is Agriculture, and who purſues it with the ſpirit of a Gentleman,—that is,—with the view of benefiting the Public, rather than himſelf; making experiments; and communicating improvements, as he goes along;—how much more worthy is he of the name of *Patriot*, than the mere Brawler in Parliament;—the Repreſentative of a rotten Borough, who paſſes whole nights in St. STEPHEN'S CHAPEL, for,—*what he is pleaſed to call*,—the Good of his Country!

Then,

Then, for the paſtimes of the Field
Various, which health and vigour yield,—
What are the vantages in Town
Can counterbalance theſe alone?
Can honours, titles, fame, or wealth
Compenſate for the loſs of health?
And, yet, how many, void of ſenſe,
In LONDON live, in preference!
There, where PANDORA, and her train
Of evils and diſeaſes reign.
AGRESTIS was not of this herd
Of fools; he happily preferr'd
His native fields; nor bluſh'd to own
He had no reliſh for the Town.
Adhering ſtrictly to his plan
Of life, as Country Gentleman;
Sollicitous to do what good
He could do in his neighbourhood,
With his advice, or fortune; he
Not doubted of felicity.
But, the firſt, greateſt good in life,
Is that beſt thing,—when good,—a Wife.
Without one, life a void would prove:
'Tis non-exiſtence not to love:
Who has a Partner only bleſt is:
So ſaid (who had not tried,) AGRESTIS.

With

With notions liberal like theſe,
The Youth, not rich, but at his eaſe,
Look'd round the neighbourhood to find
A Partner ſuited to his mind.
It were a pity ſhould he meet
With one that would his ſchemes defeat.
He wedded one, who, though ſhe brought
No caſh, was rich enough he thought:
For MARIANNE, (that was her name,)
The Parſon's daughter, had the fame
Of being economical;
A quality collateral
With wealth. Indeed, I 'd rather have
A dow'rleſs Laſs, who knew to ſave,
Than one with wealth, without the wit
Of taking proper care of it.
Who to the utmoſt of her power
Is frugal, is herſelf a dower.
MARIANNE beſides for houſewifery
With all the Laſſes round might vie.
Could net, and ſew, and puddings make
With any in the wapentake.
All theſe ſhe could, in caſe of need;
But, more accompliſh'd, ſhe could read,
And write, converſe, and dance, and ſing,
And play; in ſhort, do any thing.

Of form and manners elegant;
Admired; beloved; what could ſhe want?—
Unleſs it were a Huſband?

'*Ay:*
'*All Girls, in ſooth, want that.*'

You ſay.
I 'll not diſpute with you. They may.
But MARRIANNE, you 'll underſtand,
Wanted the beſt in all the Land.

'*All would the beſt: but ah! how few*
'*Ev'n good ones are entitled to!*'

Hold, Wretch, that too cenſorious tongue:
Should you ſome Females get among
That I could name, I fancy they
Would make you for your raſhneſs pay.

But, to my Fable. MARIANNE
Married our Country Gentleman.
Long was their Honey-moon. He lived
Whole years as if but newly wived.
No kindneſſes forgot; nor rites
Omitted: bleſt their days and nights.
But one would think 'twas JOVE's decree—
No Couple long ſhould happy be
Without encreaſe of family.
Though thouſands, and ten thouſands, who
Have Children, the misfortune rue.

Still,

Still, Wives who do not breed,—(and ſome
That do,)—are leſs attach'd to home
Than they ſhould be. So MARIANNE.
Though far from fool, her fancy ran
Rather too much upon Diverſions;
Races; Aſſemblies; Balls; Excurſions
To BATH, or BRIGHTON: but the TOWN
Her thoughts were moſtly fix'd upon.
'Who had not to Ridottos been,—
'Operas, and Plays;—and never ſeen
'ST. JAMES's, and the King, and Queen,
'And all their Bairns;—had nothing ſeen;
'Knew nothing; and had no where been.
'She hoped, howe'er, all this that ſhe
'Had ſaid would not miſtaken be.
'She was no Rambler, for her part:
'She loved her Hub with all her heart.
(AGRESTIS ſmiled and thank'd his Spouſe,)
'She doated on the old Hall-Houſe.

ST. JAMES's.] They who *have* ſeen ST. JAMES's have ſeen nothing, or next to nothing in Appearance. It is the ſhabbieſt Pile of Buildings that ever great Monarch lived in. The Nation ought for its own honour, if not for the King's, to erect a new Palace. The ſite ſhould be the Centre of HYDE-PARK, or as nearly ſo as might be. It ſhould be a Structure to challenge the admiration of Europe. No matter what time it would take in erecting: ſo that it went gradually on. Let Parliament vote annually Fifty Thouſand Pounds till it be completed. Such a trifling Sum would not perceptibly affect our preſent economic ſyſtem; and yet would, in twenty or thirty years, lodge the Monarch for-the-time-being, as the Monarch of BRITAIN ought to be lodged.

'No

'No perſon upon earth could be
'Fonder of rural life than ſhe.
'T was happineſs ſupreme to walk
'AGRESTIS with, and hear him talk
'Of Huſbandry; and how much yields
'Each crop;—how oft he fallows fields;—
'Manures 'em well: in ſhort, ſo labours,
'That he ſurpaſſes all his Neighbours.
'O, inexhauſtleſs fund of bliſs!
'Could a Town life compare with this?'

"I cannot but admire, my Dear,
"Your ſatire, though it is ſevere.
"Yours is an inexhauſtleſs vein
"Of Irony: go on again."

'The Gardens of th' HESPERIDES
'Boaſted not better bearing Trees.
'Thoſe of ALCINOUS, and ADONIS
'Were dull compared with what our own is.
'The artificial Mounts; and Glens;
'The Yews cut into Cocks and Hens;—
'FAUNUS forefend that any BROWN
'*Taſteleſs* ſhould ever cut them down!'

"Who ſays that Women are not found
"Worthy to tread on claſſic ground?
"Wiſe was her Dad to make her pat in
"Mythology; and teach her Latin.

"JOHNSON,

" JOHNSON, the Lexicographer,
" When living was a fool to her.
" In houſehold duties *Blockheads* might
" Be occupied, and take delight:—
" PALLAS be praiſed! his MARIANNE
" In Wit ſhould cope with any Man;
" Or ſet of Men: ſhe ſhould engage
" The Literati of the Age."

' Far from it. Her ambition went
' No higher, than to give content
' To him. The Country ſtill her theme
' Humble ſhould be, to pleaſure him.
' The caw of Rooks, ſhe could aver,
' Was muſic raviſhing to her.
' And not a thing about the Farm
' She ſaw, or heard, but had its charm.
' Was it not pleaſureful to hear
' The loud, ſhrill notes of Chanticleer?
' The Ducks, too, quacking in a morning
' To give the lazy Wenches warning
' When it were time to milk the Kine:—
' The low of Oxen:—grunt of Swine:—
' The Ploughman talking to his Steers:—
' All theſe were muſic to her ears.
' If any thing could give diſguſt
' To Country Wives, the Bugle muſt.

' The

'The Huntſman need not wind his horn
'So very early in the morn:
'Tempting her Huſband from her, ere
'She well can ſay—Good morrow, Dear.
'Nor ſeldom careleſs of his health
'And her, he quits his bed by ſtealth.
'Not dreaming that he up and dreſt is,
'She wakes, and ſoftly ſays—AGRESTIS!—
'Raiſes her arm to put it round
'Her Lord, no Lord is to be found.
'Equipp'd, impatient for the chace,
'He cares not for his Wife's embrace:
'The foggy air to warmth prefers;
'And DIAN's chilly arms to hers.
'Hunting is, ſure, a barb'rous ſport!
'How many Creatures ſuffer for 't.
'But Wives would have leſs cauſe to grieve,
'If Huſbands would take *civil* Leave.'

"Have you much cauſe to cenſure me,
"As wanting in civility?"

'Why, no;—not much:—but men can 't ſhow
'Too much civility, you know.
'Women are better for it: We
'Indulged in every thing ſhould be.

Careleſs of his health, and her.] Manet ſub Jove frigido Venator, teneræ Conjugis immemor.

'Huſbands would lead celeſtial lives
'Would they be govern'd by their Wives,
'In all things; and at all times grant,
'Without a queſtion, what they want.'

"If human nature perfect were,
"And Women too diſcreet to err;—
"Nothing unfit would they requeſt,
"Then all things would be for the beſt;
"And Men in granting would be bleſt.
"But tell me, without more ado,
"What this harangue is preface to."

'Not oft I wiſh abroad to range;
'Addicted am I not to change;
'I'd not give up my Country life
'To be the PRINCE OF WALES's Wife,
'Were I obliged to live in Town,
'The whole year round; but I muſt own,
'A jaunt there for ſix weeks, or ſo,
'When RUSTIC HALL is white with ſnow,
'Would give me almoſt as much joy,
'As having a fine, *chopping Boy*.'

The words 'a chopping boy' ſtill cloſed
Her ſpeech, whatever ſhe propoſed.
It was an artifice ſhe uſed
In order not to be refuſed.

For

For, ſhe a maxim held it, No man
Ought to refuſe a childleſs Woman.
As if the fault muſt ever be
In him, not her ſterility.

AGRESTIS long accuſtom'd to
Her gibes, indifferent of them grew.

The ſame thing ſaid too often o'er,
After a while affects no more.
As bells may jar upon the ear
Until one can no longer hear.

What 's to be done, then?—MARIANNE,
I warrant, will deviſe ſome plan
For compaſſing her wiſhes.—Or
She is not what I took her for.

AGRESTIS, though he would not grant
Her wiſh immediate of a Jaunt
Of *Pleaſure*, her ſo far he loved,
He might by other means be moved.
Should ſhe fall *ſick*, no doubt he would
Do for her all a Huſband could.
Convinced of this, ſhe ſickneſs feign'd;
Of head-achs, colds, and coughs complain'd:
Of agues, fevers,—and what not,—
By living in the Country got.

In ASHENFORD, not far from them,
Lived the learn'd Dr. APOZEM;

Sent

Sent for of courſe, the Doctor came,
Bliſter'd, and bled, and purged the Dame.
Bred in FOOTE's School, he open'd wide
All doors; by all expedients tried
T' expell the foe. The Doctor's ſkill
Was great: his motto—"' Cure, or kill.'"
In preſent caſe of both he fail'd;
For though the Lady little ail'd,
His phyſic did nor harm, nor good;
But *wherefore* ſhould be underſtood:
It was her prudence, not her luck,
Saved her: ſhe very rarely took
Powders, or Pills: they were convey'd
Away by SUK, her truſty Maid.

Yet MARIANNE grew worſe, and worſe;—
As ſhe pretended:—and, of courſe
Alarm'd AGRESTIS; who would fain
Have called in further aid: in vain
He urged it.—'No; no:—APOZEM
'She liked: ſhe was content with him.
'Others would but th' expence encreaſe,
'In vain; ſo pray'd to die in peace.'

"*Die*,—ſaid you?—JUPITER forefend
"You ſhould be near your latter end!
"No; MARIANNE: I truſt that we
"Shall both live long, and happily."

'It

'It is impoſſible to ſay.
'I hope we ſhall: perhaps we may.—
'But,—hem!—this teazing cough of mine
'Is ſymptom ſure of a decline.
'I ne'er, till now, knew RUSTIC HALL
'Unhealthy; but, the Damps, this Fall,
'Have brought a fever on, and cough,
'I fear me, I ſhall not ſhake off,—
'*At home:*—perhaps, a Journey wou'd,
'If taken ſpeedily, do good.'

"Think you ſo, Love? Heav'n grant it may!
"We 'll take a journey. But, which way?
"To DORSET's Downs? Or, Hills of DEVON?
"Or, further Weſt, to CORNWALL even?
"If not afraid to croſs the Seas,
"We 'll go to LISBON, if you pleaſe:
"To NICE; MADEIRA;—any where
"To benefit you by the air."

'Now you outrun my hopes, my dear
'AGRESTIS. We 'll not go ſo far.
'A Journey only LONDON to,
'May all that we can wiſh for do.
'We 'll leave our fogs, and cares behind,
'At RUSTIC HALL; and chear our mind
'With all th' Amuſements we can find.

'Twill

‘ ’Twill change the place, the ſcene, the air—’
“ No doubt of ’t. Change of place, my Dear,
“ Will change the ſcene, and eke the air.—
“ But I have never underſtood,
“ That change from bad to worſe was good.”

‘ *Children*——though *you* no family
‘ Have had, nor opportunity
‘ To try th’ effect, yet might you know—
‘ How much to change of air they owe,
‘ In hooping-coughs’.

“ Not ſuch, my Dear,
“ Is yours: although a Child you are:
“ Or would be treated like a Child;
“ And with a LONDON Rattle ſpoil’d.
“ Nay, look not angry, MARIANNE:
“ I think, I ’m not a churliſh man:
“ Yet not ſo facile, or ſo fond,
“ To go diſcretion’s bounds beyond.
“ I ’ve oft refuſed to go to Town;
“ Now, I conſent: but I will own
“ Fairly the truth, I ’ve buſineſs there.
“ As to the *goodneſs* of its air
“ For Invalids,—or morals for
“ Perſons in health,—I do abhor
“ The thought of Town. Nathleſs prepare
“ Your clothes: we ’ll paſs the winter there.”

(To

(To cut off much as I am able
Of this already-tedious Fable.)
Fancy our Couple ſafe arrived
In LONDON. Fancy they have lived
There long enough for MARIANNE
To have alarm'd her Gentleman.
With pain AGRESTIS ſaw his Wife
Give into faſhionable life.
Levity mark'd her conduct; which,
Though to a crime it might not reach,
Affected him. Like CÆSAR, he
Would not ſhe ſhould *ſuſpected* be.
Too intimate his Wife became
With LADY GADABOUT, a Dame
Of faſhion; of *notorious* ſkill
At Cards; who oft'ner at Quadrille
Black Aces held,—and Pam at Loo,
Than ſhe was thought entitled to.
Though high in rank, ſhe kindly ſtoop'd
To any one—that would be duped.
Squires' Dames but newly come to Town
She cull'd; and 'mark'd them for her own.'
With MARIANNE acquaintance made
At ſome Aſſembly where they play'd
Together, LADY GADABOUT
Took care to have her at her rout:

Was

Was civil to exceſs: ſo much
As ev'n to proffering her coach,
Or corner in it, to a Play,
Or Maſquerade, or Ranelagh;
To Hyde-Park, or to Kenſington;
Or *ſhopping* over all the Town.
She ſwallowed greedily the bait:
In other words,—grew intimate.

What not diſpleaſed her, MARIANNE
Uſually had ſome Gentleman
To flirt with her. New faces draw
Attention. This AGRESTIS ſaw:
And jealous of a Huſband's honour,
Not only kept an eye upon her,
But gave her hints:—" That ſuch a Dame,
" And ſuch, (whoſe conduct was the ſame
" As MARIANNE's,) was much to blame."

Madam their conduct juſtified;
And ſaid,—' The cruel world belied
' Women of worth: that, as to her,
' None durſt impeach her character:
' But, if they did, her *virtuous* mind
' Scoff'd at the malice of mankind.'

AGRESTIS knew that Women made
Then of their virtue moſt parade

When

When they were juſtly ſubject to
Suſpicion: but too much he knew,
An accuſation to advance
Without or proof, or circumſtance.

It is a curſe in caſes ſuch
To know too little, or too much.
When a Man knows the worſt, he may
Take comfort one or other way:
But, doubt, uncertainty, ſuſpenſe
Reſiſt the counſels of good ſenſe,
And reaſon: 'tis in vain we try
To practiſe then philoſophy.

Hearing that MARIANNE was gone
Airing one morn to Kenſington,
AGRESTIS tow'rd the Gardens bent
His ſteps. As through Hyde-Park he went,
He ſaw SIR FOPLING FLUTTER there,
Taking, with MARIANNE, the air:
Although he had forbidden her
Speaking to him; whoſe character
Was infamous as Man's could be;
Not for his feats of gallantry;—
Thoſe the World doubted: but, his tongue
On Women's reputation hung,
Like Mildew: and once faſten'd on,
Blaſted the plant it fed upon.

AGRESTIS choſe not to intrude;
But ſullenly his walk purſued.
Nor being in a humour fit
For any Friend that he might meet,
He ſought an unfrequented part;
To vent the ſorrows of his heart.

There is, from public eyes remote,
And diſtant from the Walks, a Spot
Delightful: water, wood, and lawn
In miniature; by nature drawn.
Art, too, has added an alcove,
Where happy People have made love;—
And wretched made complaint; in ſcrawls
Ill-ſpelt: as witneſs all the walls.
This liked AGRESTIS well. He ſate
Revolving on the married ſtate.
And, as he ſaw no Creature by,
Made a long, loud ſoliloquy
Againſt the Sex.

When, lo! a MOLE,
That overheard him from its hole,
Uprear'd its head; and thus began:
'Why! what a ſimpleton is Man!
'Tyrant Tormentor, to deny
'Women their ways of Gallantry!
'Is this the proof of human ſenſe,—
'To look for female continence?

'By marriage bands to think to tie
'The Sex; and make them property?
'Why form connexions? Man may have
'Pleaſure without. Why be a ſlave
'To his own notions too refined?
'What boots it to enjoy the *mind?*
'How much, much happier is a Brute;
'Who from mere appetite *goes to 't*: *
'Nor does who went before regard;
'Nor who directly afterward!'

A BLACKBIRD lent unwilling ear,
So long; but would not longer hear.
The Libertine he thus reproves:
"Talk not of your inceſtuous loves,
"Ye Moles; who, Father, Daughter, Mother
"And Son, hold commerce with each other.
"Nature, when ſhe had form'd your race,
"Foreſaw in you her own diſgrace;
"And leſt your manners ſhould be found,
"And follow'd, hid you under ground.
"But, that with leſs remorſe ye might
"Your luſts enjoy, your ſole delight,
"Nature compaſſionate and kind,
"To ſpare your bluſhes—ſtruck you blind."

The MOLE thus anſwer'd ſneeringly:
'Ere BLACKBIRDS ſpout philoſophy,

'Better

* SHAKSP.

'Better inſtructed they ſhould be.
'Fools only think we cannot ſee.
'They are miſtaken. MOLES have eyes;—
'But *wink* at female perfidies.——
'And ſo would Men if they were wiſe.'

AGRESTIS, who attentive ſate
This while, forbade the MOLE to prate.
But earneſtly the BIRD he pray'd
To talk with him the while he ſtay'd.

The BLACKBIRD, of congenial mind
With his; of ſolitary kind;
Wary, and ſhy; ſtopp'd ne'ertheleſs
To counſel him in his diſtreſs.
"I heard your long ſoliloquy;
"And that vile Animal's reply.
"As him I reprobated; you
"I meant to counſel what to do.
"Back to the Country quickly take
"Your Wife: as yet, ſhe 's but *a Rake*
"*At heart:* *—another week, or two,
"May make a *horned Beaſt* of you.
"Nor ſhe alone to blame will be:
"You give the opportunity.
"Humanity to vice is prone:
"Scarce to be truſted when alone;

"But

* POPE.

" But more corrupt it grows;—much worſe,
" By too familiar intercourſe.
" Shall Men in Cities paſs their lives,
" Exhibiting their handſome Wives
" To public gaze:—in wanton dreſs
" At Balls;—more wanton nakedneſs
" At Maſquerades:—with wine inflame,
" And Dance:—yet think to keep them tame?
" When th' ebullition of the blood
" Takes place, will *preaching* do them good?
" O! 'tis incongruous to ſuppoſe
" The Dame that much in public goes
" Can long be chaſte. Or, hurry home,
" Or, bow your neck to Cuckoldom."

The BIRD's advice exactly hit
AGRESTIS' thoughts: it ſeem'd ſo fit,
He was reſolved to follow it.

A Chaiſe, next morning at the door
Betimes, reluctant MADAM bore
From PICCADILLY. As ſhe paſt
The PARK, a *lingering look* ſhe caſt;
And ſigh'd to think it was the laſt.
As from the windows ſhe withdrew
Her head, ſhe dropt a tear or two:
Then ſulking in the corner ſate;
Nor deign'd to look upon her mate,

Nor

Nor anſwer him.—At length, howe'er,
Silence ſo grievous was to bear,
To "Yes,—and No," ſhe condeſcended;
Till, in due time, her ſullens ended.

At RUSTIC HALL they ſafe arrived:
Now their ſole reſidence. They lived
On ſo-ſo terms: but grew more dear
Each other to, from year to year.
For Country air, and quietude
Gives even current to the blood.
And when the hey-day once was o'er,
MADAM—of LONDON thought no more;
But taſte for rural life acquired:
AGRESTIS loved: his ways admired.
He, on his part, with rapture fired
Anew, in her found all that he deſired.

This happineſs they ne'er had known,
Had they lived one month more in TOWN.

FABLE

FABLE XLVIII.

The INSECT NATURALIST.

IN queſt of Objects new, a GNAT
Obſerved a TUMULUS, or Mount;
And, very anxious to know what
It might contain, alighted on 't.

As 'twas impoſſible to look
Through ſuch a vaſt opacous maſs,
The curious Creature undertook
His weak proboſcis through to paſs.

Day after day the taſk eſſay'd;
His ſpirit would not let him flinch;
By labour hard a hole he made,
In depth a quarter of an inch.

At length he found 'twas fruitleſs toil;
For, deeper not a line he went.
All he could do but ſerved to ſpoil
His little feeble inſtrument.

Reluctant, then, he laid aſide
The trial: but *Hypotheſes*
A many form'd; to ſave his pride;
And ſolve his own perplexities.

ARE

ARE not *Men* full as arrogant?—
To futile Syſtems who give birth:
And not content to walk on, want
To penetrate into the EARTH?

What matters whether *Water*, *Fire*,
Metal, or *Marble* 's at the Centre?
HIS Works we ſhould with awe admire,
Into whoſe Secrets none can enter.

This Fable is not intended to repreſs that ardour of *philoſophic Enquiry*, which, when it runs not counter to Religion, is the glory of Man:—but it is meant to check, and at the ſame time to reprehend, the *preſumption*, the *folly*, and the *wickedneſs* of thoſe, who by calling in queſtion the truth of the MOSAIC SYSTEM, would thereby weaken our religious Faith.

FABLE

FABLE XLIX.

The affected BEAR.

A BEAR obſerved an Ape one day
Making a troop of Females gay
By his pert nonſenſe, and grimaces.
So he muſt do the ſame, forſooth:
And made himſelf yet more uncouth
By practiſing—what he thought—*Graces*.

He learnt upon his toes to walk;
And ſmirk'd, and ſmil'd; and had ſmall talk—
As much as twenty Bears need have.
Yet more his gallantry to prove,
To every Female he made love;
Was every one's "obſequious Slave."

At Routs, and Balls, he *ſo* admired them,—
So complimented,—teaſed,—and tired them,—
At laſt, one whiſper'd in his ear;
'Friend BRUIN;—no more bows, and ſcrapes:
'*Coxcometry* is bad in *Apes*,—
'But worſe, believe me, in a *BEAR*.'

F A B L E L.

The Simple FARMER.

A COUNTRYMAN of more conceit, than ſenſe,
Thought he could mend the ways of Providence:
And begg'd of JUPITER, to let his Corn
Grow without beard; for, once his hands were torn
In reaping it. JOVE granted his requeſt.
The Corn ſo grew. The COUNTRYMAN ſeem'd bleſt.
The *Birds* were more ſo: for, with little pain,
And with no riſk, they peck'd out every grain.
Their's was the Harveſt. And the FARMER found,
At Autumn, only Straw upon the ground.
On which, he doff'd his hat, and ſcratch'd his head;
And growing wiſer by the leſſon, ſaid,——
"I 'm rightly ſerved. Yet, gracious JOVE, forgive
"My paſt preſumption. Let me hence receive
"Thy benefits, beſtowed as heretofore;—
"Or, *as to Thee ſeems meet.* I aſk no more."

FABLE

FABLE LI.

The EAGLE, *the* CROW, *and the* SHEPHERDS.

THE King of Birds, an Eagle, once
Bore off a Lambkin in his pounce.
A CROW obſerved the royal feat;
And had a mind to copy it.
He ſaw a Lamb; alighted on 't;
And fain aloft with it would mount.
To take firm hold of it, the fool
His feet entangled in the wool.

The SHEPHERDS ſaw; and came upon
Straightway and ſeized the Simpleton.
Whilſt they preparing were the knife
To take away his forfeit life;
The CROW beſeech'd,—'They 'd let him looſe,
'Alleging truly in excuſe,
'What he had ſeen the EAGLE do.'

"Will *his* injuſtice ſanction you?—
(They ſaid.) Beſides; you ought to die,
"Were 't only for your *idiocy*.
"Shall *Crows*,—ſuch abject Creatures,—dare
"To put themſelves upon a par
"With the firſt Bird that flits in air?—

"With

" With JOVE's vicegerent? Do not you
" Know, that thoſe ſtrong in power can do
" Acts that would ill become the weak?
" Compare your talons, and your beak
" With his. It is the ſame with us
" Men. Though alike facinorous,
" Baſe deeds by Peaſant done, or King;
" Yet dares the Monarch many a thing—
" Which, if the hardy Peaſant ſhou'd,
" He muſt atone for 't with his blood.
" Thy Folly 's ſuch, thou could'ſt not thrive,
" If we would let thee longer live:
" Therefore no ſtruggling; but ſubmit:
" For die thou muſt, *for want of Wit.*"

FABLE

FABLE LII.

The SNAKE, *and* JUPITER.

A SNAKE, which Lads tormented oft, addreſs'd
His plaint to JOVE; and pray'd to be redreſs'd.
'His Life had long become to him a load;
(He ſaid:) 'he was afraid to ſtir abroad;
'Leſt he with Schoolboys miſchievous ſhould meet.
'The cruel Urchins took delight to beat,
'And uſe him ill: with ſticks the larger ones;—
'The leſs aſſail'd him with a ſhower of ſtones.'

"And whoſe fault is it? (JUPITER replies.)
"In your own *Teeth* your proper vengeance lies.
"Had you, when firſt ill-uſed, reſented it,—
"No Boy had after riſk'd the being bit."

WHEN for a *Coward* any one is known,
In every company he 's put upon.
What makes his ſtate ſtill more accurſt:—
Poltrons, in order to conceal
Their daſtardy, will be the firſt
To bully him, and uſe him ill.

FABLE

FABLE LIII.

The AUTHOR, *and his* YOUNG FRIEND.

A YOUTH, who went one day to ſee
His *bookiſh* Coz, in London, ſaid,—
'You 've never half the Company
'With you, that has our Kinſman NED.

'Go to his Dinners when one will,
'Though age is coming on him faſt,
'His maxim is,—"'*The* PRESENT;"'—ſtill;
"'*I know no* FUTURE;—*damn the* PAST,"'

'Regretting,—"'*Why is Life ſo ſhort!*"'
'One anſwer'd him,—"'"THE NEXT IS LONG."'
"'*Is it?* (ſays he) *I 'm ſorry for 't.*——
"'*Come, Lads;—a Sentiment, or Song.*

"'*Bring t'other Bottle:—Brandy bring.* *
"'*Make noiſe enough, my Lads;—make fun.*
"'*They call me, jeeringly,—a King:—*
"'*I will, at leaſt, be* drunk † *as one.*"'

* A vulgar Parody on "'*Bring the flaſk; and muſic bring.*"'

† '*To be drunk as a King*,'—is a proverb, happily grown out of date. We have not, for many Reigns, had a drunken Beaſt upon the Throne.

Scandalous

" Scandalous!—You ſhall go no more
" To ſee him. Can he not forbear,
" One day?—Not give his follies o'er?
" Would he ſpoil all who with him are?"

' Truſt me, dear Coz, I 'll never do
' As NED does: never copy him.
' But—pardon me;—pray, do not you
' Live *t'other way* in the extreme?

' Is 't right to be alone ſo much?
' But—you 're a Satiriſt, they ſay.
' Many I know account you ſuch.
' Have you not frighten'd folks away?'

" You 've hit it. He who wields the pen
" Of Satire, muſt give umbrage to
" The Fools and Rogues amongſt the Men,
" And worthleſs Women not a few.

" But think not I 'm *alone*, my dear
" Couſin: behold where HOMER ſits:—
" There JUVENAL:—and HORACE here:
" BUTLER, BOILEAU, and other Wits.

" You know their worth to eſtimate:
" Is there not more in every page
" Of theirs, than in the idle prate,—
" The empty jargon of this Age?"

FABLE

FABLE LIV.

The VIPER, *the* FILE, *and the* SMITH.

——— *Fragili quærens illidere dentem*
Offendet ſolido.

HOR.

A VIPER crawling in a SMITH's Shop, found
A FILE of harden'd Steel upon the ground:
Which with accuſtom'd malice as he bit,
The SMITH exclaims—'You 've ſurely loſt your wit.*
'I 've ſeen you oft ſucceſsfully at work
'On ſuch ſoft, ſpungy ſubſtances as Cork;
'But, take my word for 't, you will only ſpoil
'Your brittle teeth by gnawing at a FILE.'

* Αλλ' ευηθης ει.

FABLE

FABLE LV.

NOVELTY, *and* COMMON-SENSE.

ON the ſame ſhelf perchance were found
Two BOOKS, ne'er meant to be together;
The ONE in humble ſheepſkin bound;
T' OTHER in red Morocco leather.

The ſpruce one, NOVELTY, began:—
'You-Sir! How dare you joſtle me?
'Foregad, if I had my ratan,
'I'd make you quit my company.'

When COMMON-SENSE obſerved who ſpoke,—
A very Beau,—a *Thing*, ſo kempt,
And dreſs'd,—he darted him a look
Of moſt ineffable contempt.

The Beau proceeded: 'Some one fetch
'Away this fellow. I am ſick
'At ſeeing ſuch a tatter'd wretch.
'Shopman, I ſay, make haſte; be quick.'

"Ay: prithee, do; ſays COMMON-SENSE.
"I 'm weary of this Lordling's prate.
"Or him remove, or take me hence;
"Any thing ſo we ſeparate."

Juſt then came in a Cuſtomer;
Who taking two ſuch Volumes down,
Call'd SHAFTSBURY a *Sophiſter*;
And purchaſed the *Logician* BROWN.*

* JOHN BROWN, M. A. who in 1751 publiſhed ſome admirable ESSAYS on the CHARACTERISTICS.

FABLE LVI.

The FOX, *finding, a* MASK.

AS RENARD ſtroll'd abroad one day,
He found a VIZARD in his way.
'Pity! (ſays he,) who took ſuch pains
'To *paint* thee, could not give thee *Brains*.

RENARD perhaps would ſay;—*The Fair*
Who paint their faces—brainleſs are.

FABLE

FABLE LVII.

The SPIDER, *and the* WASP.

A SPIDER who his web had ſpread
Some months, and caught a many flies,
By his ſucceſs, at length, was led
To try to make a WASP his prize.

When he had ſtrengthen'd, as he thought,
His work that nothing could break through,
The WASP,—ſo far from being caught,—
Away with all the Tackling flew.

The SPIDER from its lurking hole
Obſerved his unembarraſs'd flight;
Then curſed itſelf for Knave, and Fool;
Fretted; fell ſick; and died with ſpite.

THE *APPLICATION*, I 've not time,
Or am too idle, now to make;
Any one who can tag a rhime
May, in my ſtead, that pleaſure take.

FABLE LVIII.

The EAGLE, *and the* TORTOISE.

*** *I have told this Fable before:* (See page 78: Fable xxvii:) *and drawn from it its obvious* general *Moral. At preſent I deduce from it a* partial, *and ſeemingly a ludicrous one; but unhappily warranted by the Accident which befell* ESCHYLUS, *the Dramatiſt, and which coſt him his life.*

AN EAGLE in his talons took
A TORTOISE, who *would ſee the World*;
But, when aloft, the Fool he hurl'd
Againſt the fragment of a Rock.

'Tis ſaid, The EAGLE threw him down
On a Man's head as bald as Stone;—
Which he perchance miſtook for one.

Decapillated Beaus, take care:
Keep on your Hats abroad, or wear
Perriwigs, ye who have no hair.

Decapillated.] I hope the Reader will accept of this new-coined word, when I aſſure him I have been ſearching for a current phraſe above five minutes without ſucceſs.

FABLE

FABLE LIX.

The LEOPARD, *and the* FOX.

*** *Looking back to the duplicate of the laſt* FABLE, *I obſerve, upon the ſame page this of the* 'LEOPARD, *and the* FOX,' *told in two lines only; and partaking of the* obſcureneſs of Brevity; *which, in Compoſitions of this kind, intended for the Young, as well as the Old, ought particularly to be avoided. I therefore tell the Fable over again, ſomewhat dilated.*

A LEOPARD boaſting his variety
Of Spots, and Colours beauteous to the eye;
A FOX, who heard him, tauntingly replied:
"None will deny You have a fair *Outſide*.
"Your merit lies no deeper than your *ſkin*:
"Mine is intrinſic: I 've a *Mind* within."

FABLE

FABLE LX.

The OLD-WOMAN, *and the* CASK.

A NURSE, a perfect connoiſſeur in Gin,
Found an old KEG with naught but dregs within.
Yet, to the bunghole ſhe her noſe applied,
And ſniffing ſtrongly as ſhe could, ſhe cried;
'Exquiſite ſmell!—But, oh! how exquiſite
'The *Liquor* muſt have been, whoſe very dregs delight.'

'TIS thought that PHÆDRUS by this Fable wou'd
Hint his own *former* worth, who was ſo good
A Bard when old. If I as old ſhould be,
And give the world my dregs of poeſy,—
I wiſh the Fable may as well ſuit me.

END OF THE FABLES.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

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